

FEBRUARY 1917

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THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE



"We Can't Have Everything"
THE NEW NOVEL BY
RUPERT HUGHES



COOKING MAMA'S BREAKFAST

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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE THE GREAT SHOP WINDOW OF AMERICA

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This intensely human picture stands for all that is best in music

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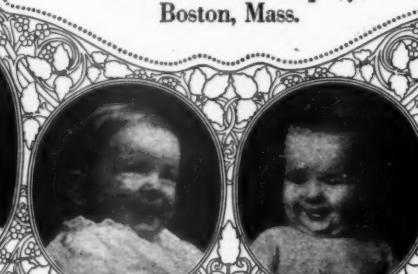
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A Spoonful
is all you need
if you use

Swift's

"Silverleaf" Brand Pure Lard
to make these good things

Graham Muffins

Take one cupful of Graham flour, one cupful of flour, three teaspoonsful of baking powder, three-quarters of a cupful of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one cupful of milk, one tablespoonful of Swift's Silverleaf Brand Pure Lard and one egg.

Sift together the flours, baking powder, sugar and salt. Melt the lard and add it with the milk and egg. Mix and bake in hot greased gem pans in a moderate oven for twenty-five minutes.

Gingerbread

One-half cupful of boiling water one cupful of molasses, two and one-half cupfuls of flour, one-half teaspoonful of salt, two and one-half teaspoonsful of baking powder, one-half cupful of powdered ginger, one-half teaspoonful of powdered cinnamon and one-fourth teaspoonful of nutmeg. Mix together the flour, salt, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add the water to the molasses. Mix together the molasses and water and add to the flour and sift them into a bowl. Add the molasses and lard and mix thoroughly. Turn into a floured and greased tin and bake in a moderate oven for 45 minutes.

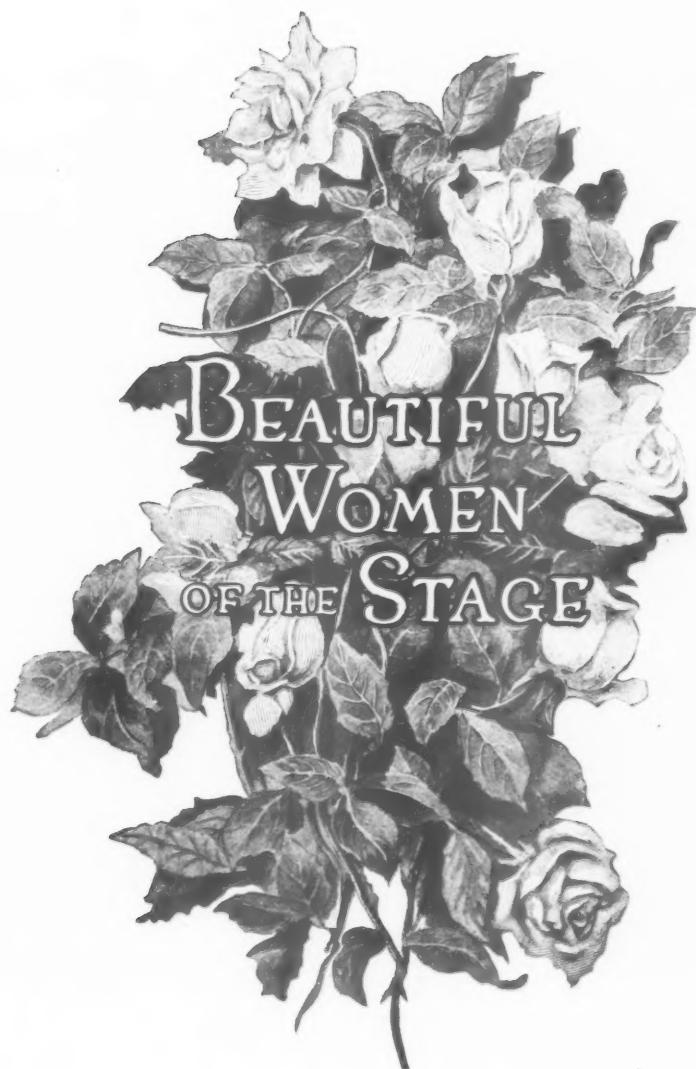
Cocoanut Cookies

Take one cupful of sugar, two eggs, one cupful of cream, one-half cupful of Swift's Silverleaf Brand Pure Lard, one-half cupful of chopped cocoanut, three cupfuls of flour, three teaspoonsful of baking powder, one-half teaspoonful of nutmeg, one-half teaspoonful of lemon extract. Beat up the eggs until light, add the cream and beat until light for ten minutes. Add the lemon extract, cream, cocoanut and flour, baking powder and salt sifted together. Put the dough in cold oven for twenty minutes. Roll out to one-fourth inch in thickness. Cut with a round cutter and bake in a moderate oven for ten minutes.

These recipes by Marion Harriett Neal, Cooking Expert of *Pictorial Review Magazine*.

Swift & Company, U. S. A.







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in "The Century Girl"
Photograph by Sarony, Inc., New York.

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PURPLE



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ST. LOUIS
READING ROOM
1921



ZITELKA DOLORES
with Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic
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MIRIAM COLLINS
in "Fixing Sister"
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February
1917

THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

Vol. XXVIII
No. 4

RAY LONG, Editor

THE most
remark-
able short
story Mr.
Terhune has
written.

The Unknown

By Albert
Payson Terhune

ILLUSTRATED BY
WILLIAM OBERHARDT



WHEN the tiny
Golden Gate
loiter in the
first-class
else more money than

When the *Aloha*
cursed night late in
ocean far southward
occasion—it was
punch brewed by a passenger who was one of the line's foremost officials.

This mild potion would not have turned the head of a ten-year-old child. Its very mildness was the captain's excuse for drinking it—that and the fact that the magnate who brewed it and who pressed the glass upon him was the arbiter of his financial destinies.

There was perhaps a teaspoonful of whisky among the other ingredients in that one glass of punch.

It was Captain Stilsen's first taste of liquor since a drastic three-month drink-cure

tourist steamship *Aloha* puffed through the in late November of 1900 for a wintertime South Seas, she carried one hundred and seven passengers who had more time than business, or health.

was creeping with blind-man caution, one fog-December, through a reef-starred stretch of remote of the travel-lanes, her captain chose that festal Christmas Eve—to accept a single small glass of punch brewed by a passenger who was one of the line's foremost officials.

course at a sanitarium eight years earlier had given him strength to change from a periodic drunkard to a smartly reliable navigator.

Stilsen went back at once to the bridge. There all the torments of hades racked his very soul. Presently, turning over the command to his first officer on plea of sudden illness, he went to his cabin.

Thither he summoned a wondering steward, who presently brought him two quart bottles of Scotch whisky, a siphon and a bowl of cracked ice.

An hour later it occurred to Captain Stilsen that the night was very foggy, that reefs were unpleasantly numerous in that stretch of sea and that a captain's place, in such a crisis, was on his bridge. This idea took such complete possession of him that he strode back to his post of duty and resumed command.

Within half an hour the *Aloha's* starboard quarter was the nesting place of a shark-tooth reef.

Stilsen did the two things that remained for a man in his circumstances to do. First he got all his passengers and crew safely into the boats before the slow-settling *Aloha's* weight tore her, inch by inch, from the upholding tooth of rock. Then he went calmly back to his own sharply listing cabin, locked its door behind him and uncorked the second quart of whisky. He was having a very pleasant time indeed when the increasing water-pressure burst inward his locked door and pushed a shower of porthole-glass into the cabin.

OF the *Aloha's* boats all but one was sooner or later picked up. All her passengers but three were rescued, in better or worse condition.

The exception, in the roster of boats, was a little naphtha launch, a mere toy. The three human absentees were:

HENRICUS VAN DUYNE (A. B., A. M., Ph. D., F. R. S.), aged forty-five, Professor of Applied Science at Coromandal University.

MARK BURLEIGH, aged fifteen, a "prep"-school boy, who had been making the voyage as the guest of his maiden aunt, Miss Susan Burleigh, of New York.

MARGUERITE CRAIG, aged fourteen, whose parents, Dr. and Mrs.

Bruce Craig (also of New York), were saved by a copra-schooner and reached home at the end of twelve incommodeous weeks.

A naphtha launch, a man of forty-five, a boy of fifteen, a girl of fourteen—these were the *Aloha's* missing. The captain did not count. There was no mystery as to his fate.

The launch (which had been stowed on deck, for the benefit of a "way" passenger who owned it and who was to have debarked three days later) had contained fuel and by Stilsen's orders had been provisioned and lowered with the other boats. Who had manned or occupied it, nobody seemed to recall.

The night had been black and foggy. The drink-dulled Stilsen had automatically—and autocratically—assigned the various passenger groups to the different boats. And without panic, but with dazed, sheeplike obedience, they had followed his commands. One boat had upset, spilling its load into the calm water, but everyone—supposedly—had been hauled aboard again when it was righted.

For weeks the tale of new-landed survivors was continued. For months Miss Susan Burleigh and the Craigs and Professor Van Duyne's invalid wife clung piteously to hope. Then, when a year had passed, they schooled themselves to face their losses.

Two insurance companies duly paid Van Duyne's widow seven thousand, five hundred dollars apiece. A dual memorial service was arranged by Miss Burleigh and the Craigs, as belated obsequies for Mark and for Marguerite. And life went on—as life has a way of doing.

But eight months after the year's lapse a whaler, touching at Sable Island, left there a very dirty and very unkempt man of middle age who promptly introduced himself to the local authorities as Henricus Van Duyne, A. B., A. M., Ph. D., F. R. S., etc., recent Professor of Applied Science at Coromandal University—who demanded instant passage to New York.

The Craigs and Miss Burleigh read the cabled account of Van Duyne's reappearance. And all three of them traveled as far north as Halifax to meet him on

They had their trip for nothing. Professor Van Duyne could give them no tidings whatever of the missing boy and girl.



his southward journey. But they had their trip and their reawakened hopes all for nothing. Professor Van Duyne could give them no tidings whatever of the missing boy and girl.

THE story Van Duyne told was simple to a degree. He and two sailors, he said, had been assigned to the naphtha launch on Stilsen's learning that he understood the working of motor-craft.

The two sailors—ignorant Lascars—had trusted neither the efficiency of such a newfangled boat nor the guidance of a landsman. Wherefore they had at once slid over the side and had swum across, under cover of the fog, to an unoccupied lifeboat fifty feet away and had climbed aboard.

Left alone, Van Duyne had tried to follow the general course of the boats ahead of him, but had lost his bearings in the fog. He had chugged along by guesswork, until daylight lifted the mist. Then all around him the ocean had showed no sign of any other craft. Taking bearings by the new-risen sun, the Professor had continued along the course the *Aloha* had been steering. His supply of fuel gave out before he could sight land. Then a gale had caught his boat astern and had driven it on—while he alternately prayed and bailed—for another forty-eight hours.

At last, with the falling of the wind, the exhausted man had sighted a hilly island blazing green in the blue glare of the sea and girt with snow-bright sand. Thither, by rigging his shirt on the launch's boat-hook, he had beaten his way more dead than alive and had beached his boat.

On that South Sea island, for six long months, he had lived. Except for lonely hopelessness, he had not fared ill. From fish to breadfruit, from trappable game to edible roots, there was natural food enough on those twenty square miles of fertile land to sustain fifty men.

There were indications aplenty of former human occupancy. A Polynesian tribe had doubtless lived there, but many, many years ago. Some pestilence had probably wiped out or at least decimated the islanders, and the place had since been shunned in terror by all other natives.

Six months later the Professor's signal was seen by a whaler cruising to the island in quest of water. The whaler's captain had been in haste to get well out beyond the reef-fringed coast before the coming of a threatened typhoon, but had stopped long enough to fill a few casks and to take the marooned professor aboard. The captain, however, had refused to leave his course to carry Van

Duyne to any port whence he could reach home. Thus the Professor had perforce remained on board, reluctantly working his passage, until toward the end of the cruise, when he was dropped at Sable Island.

The Professor's story was interesting enough, as stories go. But it ceased to interest the Craigs and Miss Burleigh as soon as they found he knew nothing about the fate of Mark and Marguerite. And again hope died.

The mourners remembered the overturning of one of the lifeboats, the spilling of its human freight into the sea, the righting of the boat and the hauling of dripping swimmers over its sides. There had been no "counting of heads," after the capsized passengers were fished aboard again. And, since the launch was now accounted for, there was no longer any mystery as to the fate of the boy and girl.

THE *Aloha* sank on Christmas Eve, 1900. On New Year's Eve, 1915, Mr. Bruce Craig received by mail a long envelope containing a brief note and a pair of typewritten sheets. The note ran:

Bruce Craig, Esq.
Dear Sir:

The enclosed is a copy I made to-day of one of the papers I found in the safe-deposit box of the late Henricus Van Duyne of this city. As Professor Van Duyne's next of kin, I was searching his effects for a will when I came upon this statement. I recall the whole case, very vividly. And it occurred to me that you have the right to see this statement at once. So I have herewith copied it. It needs no comment from me.

Very truly,
RUFUS K. VAN DUYNE.

Puzzled, Bruce Craig unfolded the sheets of typed paper and read:

I, HENRICUS VAN DUYNE, being as nearly in my right mind as ever again I can hope to be, have decided to add the following facts and corrections to the statement I made to the press, upon my arrival at Sable Island in August of this year (1902).

For obvious reasons I cannot make known these facts, while I am still living. But if I die within the next twenty

years, it may not be too late to atone in part for what I have done—and for what God will perhaps forgive me, when He remembers that He gave me the soul of a coward.

My statement to the press was in the main correct—so far as it went. The only actual falsehood I told was concerning the two sailors assigned to the launch with me.

The two persons entrusted by Captain Stilsen to my care, in the launch, were not sailors. They were a boy and a girl—Mark Burleigh and Marguerite Craig.

Nor did they jump overboard, as I said the sailors did. They remained with me through those three days of torture and fear, and they landed with me upon the island that for six months was my prison. There, through my small scientific knowledge, I taught them what plants to use or to avoid, for food. I also taught them how to weave fish-lines from fiber and to shape fishhooks from tuna-bone and how to set game-snares.

One day they two went to the western end of the island for shellfish. They started at dawn and were to return by moonlight, as it was a nine-mile journey each way. An hour after they set forth I sighted the whaler at anchor off shore; its longboat was already rowing toward me, laden with water-casks.

The captain—so the mate in charge of the boat told me—had ordered the casks filled as hastily as possible from the nearest spring, as the glass gave warning of a gale and he wished to get out into deep water. There is no safe anchorage at the island. He bade me be ready to accompany the boat as soon as the casks should be filled—or else to stay where I was.

In vain I begged him to wait until night, so that my two companions might return. He refused. When the casks were filled, I put off to the whaler with him, and there I repeated to the captain my plea for delay.

He brutally refused, telling me I might swim ashore again if I chose, and that he would not risk a hurricane among those reefs, to rescue a whole orphan-asylum.

What was there for me to do? If

I went back to that accursed island, a lifetime might elapse before the next ship would touch there—for it is far off the lines of ocean travel, and the whaler merely neared it because blown far out of her course by a storm.

How could I have benefited Craig and the girl by returning? My first duty was my wife—and to the world of science. Also—I realize it, now—I was a coward.

In brief, I made up my mind. I told the captain and mate that I had no companions on shore and that I had mentioned them only in hope of gaining time to go back to my hut, across the island, for some scientific specimens I wished to save.

The captain kicked me for lying to him; and he set me to work scraping blubber—a horrible occupation.

I had time, in the months that ensued, to realize the figure I should cut in the eyes of my friends and of the world at large should I confess I had gained my own freedom and had left my two young comrades to end their days there on the island.

I dared not face the contempt of the public. I should never have been able to live down the cowardice. It would have broken my wife's heart with shame. It would have meant my expulsion from the University—the belittling of my life work. So I framed the story I told on my arrival.

May God forgive me! May those who loved Marguerite Craig and Mark Burleigh forgive me! Perhaps, when I am dead, it will not yet be too late to rescue the two children I deserted.

And yet—if much time shall have elapsed—let those who love the two think twice before seeking to rescue them. Many years ago I read a strange book—“The Blue Lagoon,” I think, was the name. It told of a boy and a girl thus cast away on such an island; the thing has happened before now, in fact as well as in fiction. And I advise the castaways' parents or guardians to read that book.

But this latter is no affair of mine. Again I implore forgiveness—my wife's above all.

HENRICUS VAN DUYNE.

CRAIG read the confession through a second and a third time. Then he read it to his wife. Then they both went to the gloomy old Stuyvesant Square house of Miss Susan Burleigh. And there Craig read the confession aloud.

He had to read the last half of it to Miss Burleigh a second time, for in the middle of his first reading she fainted.

Then followed much more talk, interrupted now and then by a flood of hysterical tears from both women.

"What is to be done?" demanded Mr. Craig at last, his brain recovering some of its wonted working-power.

"Done?" echoed his wife, amazed. "Done? What do you mean, Bruce? Surely there's only one thing to—"

"Done?" babbled Susan Burleigh, tearfully indignant at the question. "Why, man alive, there's *everything* to be done! What's the matter with you? Don't you understand? The two babies that we've mourned as dead for fifteen years are alive! *Alive!* There on that awful island, in the South Seas! Alive—and waiting for us to bring them home. How soon can we start? It's too late, to-night, I suppose. But—"

"Yes," grimly agreed Craig, "it is *too* late, to-night. I'm afraid the last car for the South Seas has gone."

"Bruce!" gasped his wife. "How can you joke, at such—at such a sacred time? The joy has made him light-headed," she explained to Miss Burleigh.

"No," he denied, "it has made me level-headed. Some one must be. That is why I asked 'What is to be done?' You see, I once read 'The Blue Lagoon'—that book Van Duyne speaks about."

"What's that got to do with it?" shrilly challenged Miss Burleigh. "This isn't a time to talk about books."

"We can start for San Francisco, first thing to-morrow morning," declared Mrs. Craig. "And from there—"

"Yes," interposed her husband, "from there—*where?*"

"To the island, of course—by the first ship we can charter. By the—"

"Where?" doggedly insisted Craig. "Where is the island? The South Seas are fairly awash with islands—thousands and thousands of them, big and little. That's what *Polynesia* means.

It's Greek for *Many Islands*. *Pollio* means *many*, and *nesos* means—"

"But Professor Van Duyne lived there six months. Surely, he—"

"How could he know?" asked Craig. "He had no instruments, no chart. He himself said that he had no means of guessing except in the most general way, where he was. He traveled three days from the spot where the *Aloha* went down. But in what direction and at what speed? There are probably fifty islands in a two-hundred-mile circle from the place where the *Aloha* sank. And we've only a vague knowledge as to where she sank. The wreck was never located, and the ship's log wasn't saved."

"But the whaler!" cried Mrs. Craig in triumph, "the whaler that picked up Professor Van Duyne! Surely the—"

"The whaler was an old ship fifteen years ago," countered her husband. "She's probably been broken up or gone to the bottom years ago. And her captain would be impossible to locate, even if he is still alive. He was an elderly man, Van Duyne told us. And that was in 1901. The crew are scattered, of course. And probably the ship's log could never be found, now—even if the log made record of the exact latitude and longitude of an island, off the regular track, where the ship was blown by a gale and where she watered. They're notoriously careless, those whaling-men, in recording anything except catches and deaths and accidents—"

"Mr. Craig!" broke in Miss Burleigh, "I am a fairly well-to-do woman, as you may know. I don't spend one-fifth of my income—because I don't need to. And I am going to spend every cent of money I have in the world, if I have to, to find my boy. I'm going to charter a ship—not *one* ship—a dozen ships. I'm going to have the South Seas combed with a fine-tooth comb. I'm going to offer a reward of fifty thousand dollars—"

"A reward!" eagerly chimed in Mrs. Craig. "That's it! We'll *both* offer a reward—a reward big enough to set every Pacific skipper to hunting for them. Oh, we'll find them, that way. Something tells me we shall! And we'll charter a ship, too—and—"



Craig read the confession through a second and a third time.

"One minute!" said Craig gravely. "Do you realize what this means? Do you realize—"

"I realize I want my little girl—my only baby!" flamed Mrs. Craig.

"And I want my boy!" sobbed Miss Burleigh, "—the splendid little boy who never knew any mother but me. He was only my nephew. But no mother could have—"

"You don't understand me," intervened Craig. "Let me put it as kindly as I can."

HE paused to collect his words in the order he desired. Then he continued:

"You say you want your children. Miss Burleigh, your 'little boy' was fifteen when you lost him. Our little girl was fourteen. That was fifteen years ago, last week. If they are living, Mark is thirty. Marguerite is twenty-nine. Does that mean nothing to you? Think it over."

"It means that they have grown up, of course," said Miss Burleigh. "But we can make up to them for all their years of exile there, and—"

"Can we?"

Craig fairly shot the question at her.

"Can we make it up to them? If they are alive, they have lived since childhood the lives of savages—with no books, no advice, no civilized surroundings, no teachings—except Nature's. They have fished, hunted, eaten, drunk, slept. They have lived for more than half their lives as young savages might live. No,"—forestalling an interruption from his wife,—"not as young savages, but as animals. For young savages would have tribal customs and traditions and folklore and the experience of their elders to guide them. These two children had not even that. If that cur Van Duyne had stayed there with them, it would have been different. But he stayed only long enough to teach them how to sustain life—not how to *live* life. They would be dragged back here—two savages, nothing better! Perhaps something worse! Is it fair to them? Is it fair to *us*?"

"Have you any idea," persisted Craig, "in how brief a time a whole civilized

community can revert to barbarism, if it's left to itself? Then how about two children who grow up as ours have—if they've lived to grow up at all? How about clothes? How about mental exercises? How about—"

"Then we must make up to them, all the more, for what they have missed," purred Miss Burleigh benevolently.

With a groan Bruce Craig gave up the battle.

"All right!" he agreed drearily. "Have it your own way! I'll do all I can. I'll do all any mortal can do. I promise that. Only, I insist that you leave the whole matter in my hands for the present. I'll arrange for offering the reward and for chartering a boat and everything. And I'll use all the speed and all the skill that money can supply. Only, I want you not to take any steps until I've succeeded or failed. Will you agree?"

In the end, because he was a man and she a spinster, Miss Burleigh agreed. And because she had a way of obeying when she saw that queer, set look around his mouth, Mrs. Craig assented too.

And that night as he lay awake and hot-eyed beside his slumbering wife, Bruce Craig whispered over and over to himself in agony of soul:

"My little girl! Dad's own, *own* baby girl! God in His mercy grant that you're safely dead! God grant you died while you were still my baby girl!"

IN the morning Craig was quite grumpy and businesslike at breakfast, and he seemed to have forgotten all about the tidings of the night before until Mrs. Craig recalled the matter to his mind. And before the meal was fairly finished, he left the house.

He did not go, as usual, to his office, but instead to the Public Library. There, consulting newspaper files of August, 1902, he found the story of Van Duyne's rescue. The account gave the name of the whaler and of its captain—also the shipping firm that owned the vessel. It was a New York firm.

Craig jotted down the firm's address and went thither. Two hours later he was climbing the front steps of a jerry-built

New Jersey cottage. He was the bearer of a strong note of introduction from the whaling firm, to the whaler's ex-captain, Hiram H. Rance—who had for five years been on the retired list and who was ending his days here in a suburban dry-dock.

Like many another seafaring man who is an unholly terror on his own quarter-deck, Captain Hiram H. Rance, ashore, proved to be a mild-mannered and deprecatory old chap, with watery blue eyes and a lonesome-looking white patch of chin beard.

He received Craig, non-committally, in the cottage's atrocious sitting-room, and very carefully read the firm's note of introduction. Then he read it again. After that he visibly threw aside the reserve so proper to a sailor who is approached by a prosperous-looking landsman and placed himself wholly at his guest's service. "Owners' Orders" are shipmasters' Ten Commandments.

Craig told his story succinctly, yet in a way that made Rance understand the terrible problem that faced his guest and to do mental homage to the speaker's self-control. Then Craig began to ask questions. And Captain Hiram H. Rance gave full and careful replies.

Yes, Rance had perfect recollection of the island and of Van Duyne's rescue. The matter had not only been entered in the whaler's log but in the private diary which the Captain had religiously kept since boyhood (and which, after brief rummaging, he now produced from a sea-chest in the attic).

Here was the entry—six lines in all. And here, of course, were the latitude and longitude of the island.

Yes, and Captain Hiram distinctly remembered the professorial castaway's story of two fellow-refugees. He had believed Van Duyne's later assertion that there were no such refugees. He had believed it, and in his heart he had been glad, for he had been irked at the need of leaving two white people there for the sake of his ship's safety. He had believed the story, until—until—

"You see, sir, it's this way: That island, now—she's off the beaten track. She's far-an'-away off the trade-routes an' travel-lanes. I knew her, because

when I was mate on the *Annie S.* (out o' Gloucester, you know) back in 1887, we touched there for water. That's why I tried to water there when we were blowed out of our course the time we picked up your professor. I don't believe there's a craft of any kind sights that island twice in ten years—let alone stops there. An' for some queer reason, the natives steer clear of it. It isn't even charted."

"Well?" asked Craig impatiently as the narrator's rambling talk trailed away.

"Well,"—Captain Hiram took up his seemingly aimless tale,—"I was retired, back in Jan'ry, nineteen-eleven. My last voy'ge ended a week before that. A three-year cruise it was."

Again he paused, cleared his throat, and looked uncomfortable.

"In St. John's, it was, on the home-stretch," he added, "that I met up with Cap'n Boyd of the *Speed an' Follow*. (He went down with his ship an' all hands, off Sable, in nineteen-twelve.) Him an' me got to chinning about this an' that. An' he said he'd read in a newspaper about me picking up Professor Van Duyne at that island, in nineteen-twenty. He asked me a lot about the location."

"Well?" again interrupted Craig, to whom these devious reminiscences were a growing annoyance.

"Well," said Captain Hiraim more briskly, as if nettled by the other's impatience, "I couldn't make out what he was driving at, till pretty soon he tells me he sighted that island early in nineteen-ten,—that's 'bout five years back, now, you see,—being blowed off his course by one o' those mussy little tropic typhoons, same as I was. He passed the island five miles to south'ard. An' he gave it what my grandson calls 'the once-over' with his glasses. He'd heard it wasn't inhabited. But—on the beach he saw—he saw—two natives."

"What?" cried Bruce Craig in sudden tense interest. "Two natives?"

"Two natives. At least—at least, he thought they must be natives. An'—an' he *thought* there was only two of them. He couldn't be sure. The day wasn't bright, an'—"

Again his voice trailed away. Craig jumped to his feet, walked heavily to the window and stared out for a long time into the slushy suburban highway. Over and over to himself, through no volition of his, he found himself repeating the Captain's words:

"He thought they must be natives. He *thought* there was only two of them!"

Suddenly Craig turned back into the room.

"Captain Rance!" he said sharply.

next March—eighth of March. The parson told me at the time that I'd stop grieving for her, by an' by, an' get reconciled to her being took. An' maybe I will. But I don't seem to make very much progress. It's queer how much fonder a man is of his little girl than he is of his big, noisy sons, an' how much harder it is to forget her. Little girls are so cute an' loving an' gentle, an' all that. Why did you ask about Tillie?"

"I asked," said Craig, "because I want your advice—and then your help."



He'd heard the island wasn't inhabited. But on the beach he saw—two natives.

"You spoke just now of your grandson. Have you a daughter?"

"No sir," answered Rance in surprise. Then, his voice softening, he added:

"Not now. Three sons and the grandson. I hadn't but one daughter, ever. She was took to heaven when she was twelve—summer complaint. I was on a cruise at the time. I call to mind, I brought her home a toy theayter from Frisco, that trip, an' a necklace of abalone. An' she'd been dead pretty near a month when I got to shore. She'd of been—she'd of been thirty-one, this

I'll *pay* liberally for the help. But the advice must come as a gift from one stricken father to another."

"I don't seem to get your drift, sir."

"Then I'll ask the advice, first," returned Craig. "Captain, look me square in the eyes and answer me, man to man. Knowing the circumstances as you do, would you change places with me?"

"How d' you mean?" queried Captain Hiram, puzzled.

"I mean," pursued Craig, "would you rather know your little girl had died before the world could lay its dirty claws

on her—would you rather know she is happy with the Savior of little children—or to know she might still be alive, under the same conditions that *my little girl is alive—if my little girl is really alive?*"

"Why—why, what a queer question that is, now!" sputtered Captain Hiram.

"It's a fair question," insisted Craig, "and it calls for a fair answer. If you could have your choice: to know your daughter is where she is and *as she is*, or that she is *as my daughter is*—which would you choose?"

"I—I—" began the Captain; but Craig went on:

"And if your daughter were still alive and had been living as *my* daughter has, for the past fifteen years, would you bring her back to civilization? Not for your own sake, but for *hers*? Would you uproot her from the life that an unguided Nature has taught her to lead, and transplant her in twentieth-century New York? Would it—or wouldn't it—be fair to her?"

FOR a long minute, Captain Hiram made no reply. Then he said, with seeming irrelevance:

"I come of New England stock. My folks was among the first Deerfield settlers. You've read, in the hist'ry-books, about the Deerfield mass'cre? Well, a baby girl—one of my fam'ly's children—was carried off by the Injuns during that mass'cre. She was brought up a savage, an' she married a savage. Twenty years later her folks got news about her, and they brought her back to civ'lization an' to their own home in Deerfield. She was a savage, an' her ways was the ways of a savage. She pined for the Injuns. An' as soon as she could, she ran away, back to the Injuns. An'—her folks was glad enough to let her go. That's a true story. You'll find it in the hist'ry-books. Maybe it has some bearing on your question. An', again, maybe it hasn't."

"It comes as near to answering it as I'm likely to get," said Craig after a moment's hesitation. "And as near to it as I have any right to expect. So much for the advice. Now for the help I spoke of. Captain Rance, will a bonus of five thousand dollars, and all ex-

penses paid, induce you to charter a ship and go to the island with me to bring back my daughter and Mark Burleigh?"

"Hey?" grunted the astonished seaman.

"Remember," added Craig, "I foot every bill. And you get not only master's pay from the minute you sign on, but a five-thousand-dollar bonus—half of it in advance."

"But—but Mr. Craig," faltered Captain Hiram, his brain buzzing with the temptation to add so much easy money to his meager savings. "But why *me*? There's scores of younger men—"

"You are the man I want," said Craig tensely. "I've decided that, since I've been here. You are the man I want, because you *understand*. To the ordinary shipmaster, it would be only a job. Will you do it?"

In the end, Captain Hiram consented.

NEXT morning Captain Hiram and Bruce Craig started together for San Francisco. Craig, by superhuman eloquence and argument and bulldozing, prevailed on the two women to remain in New York until his cable from Honolulu, on the return trip, should apprise them whether or not there was need for them to come out to California to meet him.

Six days later, on the slippery docks of San Francisco, Craig fell, breaking his right leg in two places—one of the breaks being a compound fracture.

Two months in the hospital was the very best the local surgeon could promise the sufferer. And Captain Hiram perforce chartered a ship and set sail without him. On the eve of sailing the Captain came to the hospital for final orders.

"I'm doubly glad I chose you for this job instead of any other man," said Craig, who was reclining with his plaster-cast leg thrust grotesquely out in front of him, "doubly glad. Because on this quest, you've got to be not only Captain Hiram H. Rance but Bruce Craig as well. Do you understand me? You've got to use not only your own judgment, but mine as well. I—I can't speak any more plainly. I have no right to—not even to myself. But—but keep on think-

ing of your own little girl when you go to look for mine. Just imagine you're Bruce Craig, in search of Hiram Rance's lost daughter. I—I—"

"I guess I catch your signals," said Rance gruffly, blinking very fast. "Good-by, Mr. Craig. I don't mind telling you I'd rather do a month in irons in the booby hatch, than tote the load you've just crowded onto my shoulders. I'll have to act as the Good Man gives me light to. That's the best anyone can do."

EIGHT weeks later Bruce Craig, supported by a crutch and a cane, hobbled forward to greet Captain Hiram H. Rance as the latter entered the hotel room whither Craig had been removed from the hospital two days earlier.

"Your 'No-one-alive-on-island' cable from Honolulu kept me from boarding the first liner and coming out to meet you," said Craig as the Captain silently shook hands with him. "You've nothing to add to that?"

"I'm glad you're on your legs again," replied the Captain, finding his voice with some effort and speaking with unwanted effusion. "You're looking better'n I expected to see you, after such a lay-by. I'm sorry you've had to pay out so much good money, too, on a fool's errand. I—"

"Tell me about it! Sit down and tell me about it—everything. You found the island without any trouble?"

"Found it?" repeated Captain Hiram with fine scorn. "Why wouldn't I find it? Give me the latitood and longitood of a place, an' I'll find it as easy as you'd find a house-number. Any navigator can. I—"

"Captain," interposed Craig, "I want you to tell me what you found there. And—it's only a detail, of course—I wish you would humor a sick man's whim by looking at *me* instead of at the floor. You got to the island. Well? What then?"

"We searched three days high an' low," said Rance glibly, like one who repeats a well-learned lesson. "Not a living soul there—not anywhere. We stumbled onto an old thatch, at last. It was overgrown with jungle an' looked like a landsman had built it—Van

Duyne, most likely. An'—brace yourself, take it brave, sir—in sep'rate corners of the shack we come upon two skelet'ons—of a boy an' girl, it looked like—about fifteen years old, I should say. I take it they'd died of hunger or something when Van Duyne wasn't there any longer to teach 'em what to eat. That man had ought to have been hanged, for leaving them. We buried the bones, an' I read a service over 'em. Then we provisioned with a lot of fresh fruits an' fish an' the like, an' we came back."

"You were able to provision your ship there," commented Craig, "and yet you say they died of starvation? After Van Duyne had taught them how to fish and to trap and to—"

"I didn't say they starved," growled Rance crossly. "I only said I s'posed so. All I know is that I found their—"

"And there were no natives on the island?"

"Not a one. Not a sign of any living person, native or white."

"Yet your friend told you he saw two people—at least two people there, five years ago. Marguerite and Mark would have been twenty-four and twenty-five years old at that time. The skeletons, you say, were of a boy and girl of about fifteen?"

"Look here, Mr. Craig!" bellowed Rance in sudden rage, "I aint used to having my word questioned—"

"Did you ever study physiognomy, Captain Rance?" asked Craig very quietly. "I ask because a study of physiognomy has taught me two things: one is that a thoroughly angry or indignant man always looks straight into the other fellow's eyes. The other is that an amateur liar always clenches his fists when he's telling his most important lies."

"What's all that got to do with—"

"With the fact that you've been looking everywhere except at me?" broke in Craig's dead voice, "and that your fists are so tightly clenched that the knuckles are bone-white? I don't know, I'm sure. We'll start back for New York, this evening, you and I. You've earned your pay, if ever a man did. You're a good fellow, Rance. And a—a good father!"

KEDZIE THROPP, of Nimrim, Missouri, had beauty—and nothing else. She had never been anywhere, never had anything—but wanted everything.

Jim Dyckman, of Fifth Avenue, New York, had been everywhere, had had everything—and all he wanted was love and contentment.

The two saw each other for the first time on a train going into New York, but neither knew it afterward. For Kedzie was dreaming of what was before her and Dyckman was looking into the eyes of Charity Coe Cheever, a person of travel and wealth as unlimited as his own. Dyckman had loved Charity since childhood. But before the slow-moving Jim claimed her as his own, Peter Cheeyer, a more tempestuous wooer, had come along and carried her off her feet.

The Cheevers had not been long married when the husband, still tempestuous, left his lovely wife in a Paris hospital, caring for wounded and orphans, while he crossed to New York and dallied with Zada L'Etoile, a dancer.

Charity Coe had come home but did not know, and was still devoted to Cheever. She met Dyckman by chance on the train.

At the Grand Central Station, the two were seen by Prissy Atterbury, an accomplished gossip. Atterbury planned to regale a weekend party with the choice bit, for everyone knew that Jim Dyckman still loved Charity Coe and that Cheever hated Dyckman.

Before leaving the train, Kedzie's father, petty claim adjuster who "thought he knew a thing or two," was directed by a wag to stay at the Biltmore. There Father Thropp thought the price twelve dollars for two rooms meant for two rooms and board for a week. So Kedzie got her first glimpse of New York from the top.

Here she again saw Dyckman and Charity Coe and Cheever. While the Throps senior slept, Kedzie stole down to the supper-room and hid where she could watch. Cheever was at a table with Zada L'Etoile. And Charity was with Jim Dyckman, whom she had asked to take her somewhere to fight her loneliness. Cheever saw Charity before Charity saw him. He slipped out through the crowd. The next day he amazed his wife by entertaining her in honeymoon style.

That day was even more momentous for Kedzie. Her father found what New York hotel prices really were and ordered his family to go at once to cheaper quarters. Kedzie, intoxicated with the luxury, refused to budge. Then Thropp

père, already bursting with anger, put his girl across his knee and spanked her. After that he led his womenfolk to the street. There the crossing was a maelstrom. Kedzie dropped her valise for safety, and made into the crowd.

The Throps called on the police to help find their girl, and the newspapers helped. But Kedzie eluded all search. She took a subway train uptown and lost herself in a moving-picture house where the name of the heroine, Anita Adair, pleased her so much that she adopted it. That night she slept in a park.

Kedzie's first friend was a restaurant waiter, Skip Magruder, who found her work in a candy shop, and loved her awkwardly. But Kedzie's vision widened. She began to think of Skip and his kind as "mutts." She became a professional model for calendars and fell in love with an advertisement writer named Gilfoyle.

In the meantime, sweet Charity Coe's short happiness with her husband came to an end and another unhappiness budded and bore fruit. Zada L'Etoile won Cheever back. And at a house-party, Prissy Atterbury recited his news of seeing Charity and Jim Dyckman come in on the same train. He gently interwove the inference that Dyckman had been with Charity in the mountains. Many believed it. Zada L'Etoile grabbed at it. She told Cheever, who believed it till Charity slapped his face when he went to her about it. Then Mrs. Noxon, leader at Newport, invited Charity down for a week and to be present at her big fête. That silenced gossip for a bit. There Charity met Dyckman again—and Kedzie.

Kedzie danced with a troupe of performers at the fête. Dyckman was struck by her beauty; Charity noticed it. Kedzie, while dancing, fell into the fountain. Dyckman pulled her out. Discharged for her awkwardness, she went to New York and married Gilfoyle. Gilfoyle lost his job and Kedzie's interest in a few days.

Charity Coe planned to give a society motion-picture show to raise money for war victims. She got work for Kedzie with a moving-picture company, where the girl's beauty made an immediate hit. Ferriday, the director, promised Kedzie to flash her loveliness over the world.

At the same minute Charity Coe was asking Dyckman, whom she chanced to meet at the Ritz, to get Ferriday to manage her show for her. Cheever, entering with Zada, saw them together. He knew Charity must not see him with Zada, and felt grateful when the quick-witted Zada pretended sudden illness to explain their hasty departure.

The Opening Chapters of "We Can't Have Everything"

The story continues on the following page.

WE CAN'T HAVE



By
Rupert Hughes

Author of "What Will People Say?"
"Empty Pockets" and "The
Thirteenth Commandment."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE things we are ashamed of are an acid test of our souls. Kedzie Thropp was constantly improving the quality of her disgusts.

A few months ago she was hardly ashamed of sleeping under a park bench. And already here she was sliding through the street in a limousine. It was a shabby limousine but she was not yet ready to be ashamed of any limousine. She was proud to have it lent to her, proud to know anybody who owned such a thing.

What she was ashamed of now was the home it must take her to and the jobless husband waiting for her there. She was ashamed of herself for tying up with a husband so soon. She had married in haste and repented in haste. And there was a lot of leisure for more repentance.

Already her husband was such a handicap that she had refrained from mentioning his existence to the great moving-picture director who had opened a new world of glory to her—thrown on a screen, as it were, a cinematation of her future, where triumphs followed each other with moving-picture rapidity. He had made a scenario of her and invited her to dinner.

She smiled a little at the inspiration that had saved her from confessing she was Mrs. Gilfoyle. It was neat of her to tell Mr. Ferri-day that she could be addressed "in care of Mrs. Gilfoyle." In

"WE Can't Have Everything" is Mr. Hughes' most vivid and daring novel. With this installment begins its most engrossing phase—the junction of the paths of Jim Dyckman, who had always had everything, and of Kedzie Thropp, who had never had anything. If by any mischance you missed the earlier chapters, the complete resume on page 653 enables you to begin the story now. We recommend it as the best reading of the year. *oo oo oo*

EVERYTHING

Illustrated by
James
Montgomery
Flagg

care of herself! That was just what she was. Who else was so interested in Kedzie's advancement as Kedzie?

SHE was a bitterly disappointed Kedzie just now. Ferriday had told her to go down to Lady Powell-Carewe and get herself a bevy of specially designed gowns at the expense of the firm. There was hardly a woman alive who would not have rejoiced at such a mission. To Kedzie, who had never had a gown made by anything higher than a sewing woman, the privilege was heavenly. Also, she had never met a Lady with a capital L.

The dual strain might have been the death of her, but she was saved by the absence of Lady Powell-Carewe. Kedzie went back to the street, sick with deferred hope. Ferriday's chauffeur was waiting to take her home. She felt grateful for the thoughtfulness of Ferriday and crept in.

The nearer Kedzie came to her lowly highly flat, the less she wanted even the chauffeur of Mr. Ferriday's limousine to see her enter it. He would come for her again at night, but the building did not look so bad at night.

So she tapped on the glass and told him to let her out, please, at the drug-store, as she had some marketing to do.

"Sure, Miss," said the chauffeur.

Kedzie liked that "Miss." It was ever so much prettier than "Mizzuz." She bought some postage stamps at the drug-store and some pork chops at the butcher's and went down the street and up the stairs to her life-partner, dog on him!

Gilfoyle was just finishing a poem, and he was the least poetic thing in the world to her, next to his poem. He was in his sock feet; his suspenders were down—he would wear the hateful things! his collar was off, his sleeves up; his detachable cuffs were detached and stuck on the mantelpiece; his hair was crazy, and he had ink smears on his nose.

"Don't speak to me!" he said frantically, as he thumped the table with finger



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"Sure, Miss," said the chauffeur.

Kedzie liked that "Miss." It was ever so much prettier than "Mizzuz." She bought some postage stamps at the drug-store and some pork chops at the butcher's and went down the street and up the stairs to her life-partner, dog on him!

Gilfoyle was just finishing a poem, and he was the least poetic thing in the world to her, next to his poem. He was in his sock feet; his suspenders were down—he would wear the hateful things! his collar was off, his sleeves up; his detachable cuffs were detached and stuck on the mantelpiece; his hair was crazy, and he had ink smears on his nose.

"Don't speak to me!" he said frantically, as he thumped the table with finger

Jim
Dyckman



after finger to verify the meter.

"No danger!" said Kedzie, and went into the bedroom to look over her scant wardrobe and choose the least of its evils to wear.

She shook her head at her poverty and went to the kitchen to cook lunch for her man. He followed her and read her his poem while she slammed the oven door of the gas stove at the exquisitely wrong moments. She broke his heart by her indifference and he tore up the poem, carefully saving the pieces.

"A whole day's work and five dollars gone!" he groaned. He was so sulky that he forgot to ask her why she had come home so early. He assumed that she had been turned off. She taxed her ingenuity to devise some way of getting to the dinner with Ferriday without letting Gilfoyle know of it. At last she made so bold as to tell her husband that she thought she would drop in at her old boarding-house and stay for dinner if she got asked.

"I'm sick of my cooking," she said.

"So am I, darling. Go by all means!" said Gilfoyle, who owed her one for the poem.

Kedzie was suspicious of his willingness to let her go, but already she had outgrown jealousy of him. As a matter of fact, he had been invited to join a few cronies at dinner in a grimy Italian boarding-house. They gave it a little interest by calling it a "speak easy," because the proprietor sold liquor without a license. Gilfoyle's cronies did not know of his marriage and he was sure that Kedzie would not fit. She did not even know the names of the successful, therefore mercenary, writers and illustrators nor the names of the unsuccessful, therefore artistic and sincere.

To Kedzie's delight Gilfoyle took himself off at the end of a perfect day of misery. He left her alone with her ambitions. She was in very grand company. She hated the duds she had to wear but she solaced herself with planning what she should buy when money was rolling in.

WHEN Ferriday's car came for her she was standing in the doorway. She hopped in like the Cinderella that

Ferriday had called her. When the car rolled up to the Knickerbocker hotel, she pretended that it was her own motor.

Ferriday was standing at the curb, humbly bareheaded. He wore a dinner jacket and a soft hat which he tucked under his arm so that he might clasp her hands in both of his with a costume-play fervor. He had been an actor once—and he boasted that he had been a very bad one.

Kedzie felt as if he were helping her from a sedan chair. She imagined her knee skirts lengthened to a brocaded train, and his trousers gathered up into knee breeches with silver buckles.

Bitterness came back to her as she entered the hotel and her limpsey little cloth gown must brush the Parisian skirts of the richly clad other women.

She pouted in right earnest and it was infinitely becoming to her. Ferriday was not thinking of the price or cut of her frock. He was perceiving the flexible figure that informed it, the virginal shoulders that curved up out of it, the slender, limber throat that aspired from them and the flower-poise of her head on its white stalk.

"You are perfect," he groaned into her ear, with a flattering agony of appreciation.

That made everything all right and she did not tremble much even before the maître-d'hôtel. She was a trifle alarmed at the covey of waiters who hastened to their table to pull out the chairs and push them in and fetch the water and bread and butter and silver and plates. She was glad to have long gloves to take off slowly while she recovered herself and took in the gorgeous room full of gorgeous people. Gloves are most useful coming off and going on.

Kedzie was afraid of the bill of fare with its complex French terms, but Ferriday took command of the menu.

When he was working, Ferriday could wolf a sandwich with the fangs of a busy artist and give orders with a shred of meat in one hand and a mug of coffee in the other. But when he luxuriated he luxuriated.

To-night he was tired of life and dejected from his battle with the miserly

backers, who had warned him for the last time once more that he had to economize. He needed to forget such people and the loathsome enemy of fancy, economy.

"I want to order something as exquisite as you are," he said. "Of course, there could be nothing as exquisite as you are, Miss Adair—unless you were curled up on a silver dish with a little apple in your mouth like a young roast pig. Ever read Lamb on pig?"

Kedzie laughed with glancing tintinnabulations as if one tapped a row of glasses with a knife.

Ferriday sighed. He saw that she had never heard of Lamb and thought he was perpetrating an ancient pun. But he did not like bookish women and he often said that nothing was more becoming to a woman than ignorance. They should have wisdom, but no learning.

Ferriday was one of those terrifying persons who know, or pretend to know, curious secrets about restaurants and their resources. Wine cellars and the individualities of chefs had no terror for him so far as she could see. He expressed contempt for apparent commonplaces that Kedzie had never heard of. He used French words with an accent that Kedzie supposed to be perfect.

The waiters knew that he did not know much and had merely picked up a smattering of dining-room lore, but they humored his affectations.

"Would you prefer the Astrakhan caviar?" he began on Kedzie, "or some or-durv? The caviar here is fairly trustworthy." Kedzie shrugged her perfectly accented shoulders in a cowardly evasion, and he ordered the first caviar Kedzie had ever eaten. It looked as if it came from a munition factory but she liked it immensely, especially as a side-long glance at the bill of fare told her that it cost one dollar and twenty-five cents per person.

Next he proposed either a potage madrilène or a crème de volaille, Marie Louise. Kedzie chose the latter because it was the latter. She mumbled:

"I think a little creamy vly Marie Louise would be nice."

She was amazed to find later how much it tasted like chicken soup.

"We don't want any fish, do we?" Ferriday moaned. "Or do we? They don't really understand the *suprême de sole à la Verdi* here, so suppose we skip to the roast, unless you would risk the *aiguillette de pompano*, Coquelin. The last time I had a *tronçon de saumon* here, I had to send it back."

Kedzie said: "Let's skip."

She shuddered. The word reminded her, as always, of Skip Magruder. She remembered how he had hung over the table that far-away morning and recommended ham'n'eggs. His dirty shirt-sleeves and his grin came back to her now. The gruesome *Banquo* reminded her so vividly of her early guilt of plебiancy that she shivered. The alert Ferriday noticed it and called:

"Have that window closed at once. There's an infernal draught here."

Kedzie was thrilled at his autocratic manner. He scared off the ghost of Magruder.

Ferriday pondered aloud the bill of fare as if it were the plot of a new feature film.

"Capon en casserole, milk-fed guinea hen escoffier, plover en cocotte, English golden pheasant, partridge—do any of those tiresome things interest you?"

It was like asking her whether she would have a Gorham tea-set, a Balcom gown or a Packard landaulet. She wanted them all.

But her eyes caught the prices. Four dollars for an English pheasant! No wonder they called it golden. It seemed a shame, though, to stick such a nice man, after he had already ordered two dollars and a half's worth of caviar.

She chose the cheapest thing. She was already falling in love with Ferriday.

The plover was only a dollar. She was not quite sure what kind of animal it would turn out to be. She had a womanly intuition that it was a fowl of some breed. She wanted to know. She had come to the stomach school.

"I think I'll take a bit of the plover," she said.

"Nice girl!" thought Ferriday, who recognized her vicarious economy.

"Plover it is," he said to the waiter, and added: "Tell Pierre it's for me and he'd better not burn it again."



Lady Powell-Carewe tried various styles on Kedzie The feel of the crisp and whispering taffetas, the elevation rapture on rapture. Standing there with a burden of fabrics upon her and Lady Powell-Carewe kneeling—ancient days of six months gone when her mother used to kneel about her and fit on her a genuine Lady at her feet. It was a triumph indeed. It was not hard



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of the brocades, the warm nothingness of the chiffons like wisps of fog, the rich dignity of the cloths, gave Kedzie
ing at her feet pinning them up and tucking them here and there, Kedzie was reminded of those
the home-made school-dress cut out according to Butterick patterns. Now Kedzie had
now to believe that she would have all the world at her feet one day.

The waiter was crushed by Pierre's lapse, especially as the chef's name was Achille.

Ferriday went on: "With the plover we might have some *champignons frais sous cloche* and a *salade de laitue avec* French dressing, yes? Then a substantial sweet: a *coupe aux marrons* or a *nesselrode* pudding, yes?"

Kedzie wanted to ask for a plain, familiar vanilla ice-cream, but she knew better. She ordered the *nesselrode*—and got her ice-cream after all. There were chestnuts frozen in it too—so she was glad she had not selected the *coupe aux marrons*.

Ferriday did not take a sweet, but had a cheese instead, after an anxious debate with the waiter about the health of the camembert and the decadence of the roquefort. When this weighty matter was settled, he returned to Kedzie:

"Now for something to drink. A little sherry and bitters to begin with, of course; and a—oh, umm, let me see—simple things are best; suppose we stick to champagne." He called it "shah pine," according to Kedzie's ear, but she hoped he meant shampagne. She had always wanted to taste "wealthy water," as Gilfoyle called it, but never called for it.

Kedzie was a trifle alarmed when Ferriday said: "I hope you don't like it sweet. It can't be too dry for me."

"Me, either," Kedzie assured him—and made a face implying that she always took it in the form of a powder.

Ferriday smiled benignly and said to the waiter: "You might bring us een boo-tay de Bollinger Numéro—er—katter—vang—kanz." He knew that the French for 95 was four-twenties-fifteen, but the waiter could not understand till he placed his finger on the number with his best French accent. He saved himself from collapse by a stern post-dictum:

"Remember, it's the vintage of 1900. If you bring that loathsome 1893, I'll have to crack the bottle over your head. You wouldn't want that, would you?"

"Non, m'zoo, oui, monzoo," said the German waiter.

"Then we'll have some black coffee and a liqueur—a curaçao, say, or a green

chartreuse, or a white mint. Which?"

Naturally Kedzie said the white mint, please.

With that Ferriday released the waiter, who hurried away hoping that Ferriday's affectations included extravagant tips.

KEDZIE gobbled prettily the food before her. Ferriday could tell that she was anxiously watching and copying his methods of attack. He soon knew that this was her first real meal *de luxe*, but he did not mind that. Columbus was not angry at America because it had never seen an explorer before.

It delighted Ferriday to think that he had discovered Kedzie. He would say later that he invented her. And she wanted tremendously to be discovered or invented or anything else, by anybody who could find a gold mine in her somewhere, and pay her a royalty on her own mineral wealth.

When her lips met the shell-edge of the champagne glass and the essence of all mischief flung its spray against the tip of her cleverly whittled nose, she winced at first. But she went boldly back, and soon the sprites that rained upward in her glass were sending up tiny balloons of hope in her brain. They soared through her small skull and her braided hair and the crown of her hat and on up through the ceiling, and none of them broke—as yet.

Her soul was pleasantly a-simmer now and she could not tell whether the wine made her exultant or she the wine. But she was sure that she had at last discovered her life.

And with it all she was dreadfully canny. She was only a little village girl unused to city ways, and the handsome city stranger was plying her with wine; but she was none of your stencil figures that blot romance.

Kedzie was thinking over the cold, hard precepts that women acquire somehow. She was resolving that since she was to be as great as he said she should be, she must not cheapen herself now.

Many of these little village girls have come to town since time was and brought with them the level heads of icily wise women who make love a business and not

a folly. Many men are keeping sober mainly nowadays because it is good business; many women pure for the same reason.

Turkish sultans as fierce as Suleiman the Magnificent have bought country girls kidnaped by slave-merchants and have bought tyrants in the bargain. Ferriday the Magnificent was playing with holocaust when he set a match to Kedzie.

But now she was an attractive little flame and he watched her soul flicker and gave it fuel. He also gave it a cigarette; at least he proffered her his silver case, but she shook her head.

"Why not?" he asked. "All the women old and young are smoking here."

She tightened her plump lips and answered:

"I don't like 'em; and they give me the fidgets."

"You'll do!" he cried softly, reaching out and clenching her knuckles in his palm a moment. "You're the wise one! I felt sure that pretty little face of yours was only a mask for the ugliest and most valuable thing a woman can possess."

"What's that?" said Kedzie, hoping he was not going to begin big talk.

"Wisdom," said Ferriday. "A woman ought to be as wise as the serpent but she ought to have the eyes of a dove. Your baby sweetness is worth a fortune on the screen if you have brains enough to manage it, and I fancy you have. Here's to you, Miss Anita Adair!"

He drank deep but she only touched the brim. She saw that he was drinking too much—he had had several cocktails while he waited for her to arrive. Kedzie felt that one of the two must keep a clear head. She found that ice-water was a good antidote for champagne.

When Ferriday sharply ordered the waiter to look to her glass she shook her head. When he finished the bottle and the waiter put it mouth down in the ice as an eloquent reminder, Ferriday accepted the challenge and ordered another bottle. He was just thickened of tongue enough to say "boggle."

Kedzie spoke quickly:

"Please, no. I must go home. It's later than I thought, and—"

"And Mrs. Gilfoyle will wonder," Ferriday laughed. "That's right, my dear. You've got to keep good hours if you are going to sucethee on the screen. Early to bed, for you must early-to-rise. *Garçon, garçon, l'addition, s'il vous please.*"

While he was paying the bill, Kedzie was thinking fleetly of her next problem. He would want to take her home in his car, and it would be just her luck to find her husband on the doorstep. In any case, she was afraid that Ferriday would be sentimental and she did not want Ferriday to be sentimental just yet. And she would not tolerate a sentiment inspired or influenced by wine. Love from a bottle is far from a compliment.

Already she was a little disappointed in Ferriday. He was a great man but he had his fault and she had found him out. If he were going to be of use to her she must snub that vinous phase at once.

THE cool air outside seemed to gratify Ferriday and he took off his hat while the carriage starter whistled up his car. Now Kedzie said:

"Please, Mr. Ferriday, just put me in a taxicab."

"Nonsense! I'll take you home. I'll certainly take you home."

"No, please; it's 'way out of your way, and I—I'd rather—really I would."

Ferriday stared hard at her as if she were just a trifle blurred. He frowned; then he smiled:

"Why, bless your soul, if you'd rather I wouldn't oppose you, I wouldn't—not for worlds. But you sha'n't go home in any old cabby taxishab; you'll take my wagon and I'll walk. The walk will do me good."

Kedzie thought it would, too, so she consented with appropriate reluctance. He lifted her in and closed the door—then leaned in to laugh:

"Give my love to old Mrs. Gilfoyle. And don't fail to be at the studio bright and early. We'll have to make sun while the hay shines, you know. Good night, Miss Adair!"

"Good night, Mr. Ferriday, and thank you ever so much for the perfectly lovely evening."

"It has been 1-1-lovely. Goo-ood night!"

The car swept away and made a big turn. She saw Ferriday marching grandiosely along the street, with his head bared to the cool moonlight. She settled back and snuggled into the cushions, imagining the car her very own.

She left her glory behind her as she climbed the long stairs, briskly preparing her lies and her defensive temper for her husband's wrathful greeting.

He was not there.

KEDZIE had no sooner rejoiced in the fortunate absence of her husband than she began to worry because he was away. Where was he and with whom? She sat by the window and looked up and down the street but she could find none among the pedestrians who looked like her possessor.

She fell asleep among her worries. She was awakened by the noisy entrance of her spouse. He was hardly recognizable. She thought at first that her eyes were bleary with sleep, but it was his face that was bleary. He was like a Flagg caricature of him—with the same merciless truth in the grotesque.

Kedzie had never seen him boozy before; she groaned expressively:

"My Gawd, you're pie-eyed."

He tried to take her into his arms. She slapped his hands away. He laughed and flopped into a chair, giggling. She studied him with almost more interest than repugnance. He was idiotically jovial, as sly as an idiot and as inscrutable.

Without waiting to be asked he began a recital of his chronicles. He was as evidently concealing certain things as boasting of others. Kedzie rather hoped he had done something to conceal, since that would be an atonement for her own subtleties.

His treachery had included nothing less than the rewriting of his poem about her first name to fit a girl named Marguerita. He told her nothing of that, but maundered:

"Wonnerful thing happened t'night, Anita. Just shows you never know where your lucksh goin' to hit you. I'm down

there with—er—er—couple of old friensh, you know, and who comes over to our table but big feller from out Wesh — Chicago — Gobbless Ch'cag'! His name is entitled Deshler. In coursh conv'sation I mention Breathasweeta Shewring Gum—see?—he says he knew that gum and he'd sheen the advershments. 'Bes' ol' advershments ever sheen,' thass what Mr. Keshler said and I'm not lyin' to you Anita. No sir.

"Whereupon—whereupon I modes'ly remark: 'Of course, they're clever—nashurally they're clever, because they were written by li'l' Mr. Me!' He says, 'You really wrot'em?' and I say, 'I really wret'em!' And Mr. Neshler says, 'Well I'll be g'dam!' Then he says, 'Who coined that name Breathasweeta?' And I says, 'I did!' And he says, 'Well, I'll be g'dam'!"

"Anyway, to make long shory stort, Mr. Nestor says, 'What you doin' now, writin' copy for the Kaiser or the K-zar?' and I says, 'I am a gen'leman of leisure,' and he says, 'There's a good job waitin' fer lad your size out in Ch'cag'! Would you come 'way out there?' and I says, 'I fear nothing!'

"So Mr. Zeisselber wrote his name on a card, and if I haven't los' card, or he doesn't change his old mind, I am now Mr. John J. Job of Chicago. And now I got unsolishited posish—unposishible solishion solution—unpolushion solishible—you know what I mean. So kiss me."

Kedzie escaped the kiss, but she asked with a sleepy eagerness:

"Tell him you were married?"

"Nashur'ly not, my dear. It was stric'ly business conv'sation. I didn't ask him how many shil'ren he had and he didn't ask me if I was a Benedictine or a—or pony of brandy—thass pretty good. Hope I can rememmer it to-mor'."

Kedzie smiled but not at his boozy pun. Next to being innocent, being absolved is the most soothing of sensations.

CHAPTER XXV

THE next morning that parrot, still unmurdered, woke Kedzie early. She was no longer merely Mrs. Anita Gilfoyle, the flat-dwelling nobody. She was now



James Montgomery Flagg

Zada arrived at the theater before Cheever and Charity did. She waited a long time, haughtily indifferent to the admiration she and her gown were achieving. At last she was punished and rewarded, revenged and destroyed, by the sight of Cheever coming down the aisle with Charity. They paused facing Zada. Cheever caught her eye and halted petrified long enough for Charity to sit down, look up at him, follow the line of his gaze and catch a full blast of Zada's beauty and of the fierce look she fastened on Cheever.

Anita Adair, the screen-queen. She was needed at the studio.

She rose and looked back and down at the man whom the law had united her with indissolubly. Eve must have wondered back at Adam with the same sense of escape while he lay asleep. Kedzie gazed on her Adam with a sense of departure, of farewell. She felt a trifle sorry for Gilfoyle, and the moment she resolved to quit him, he became a little more attractive.

There was something pitiful about his helpless sprawl: his very awkwardness endeared him infinitesimally. She nearly felt that tenderness which good wives and fond mothers feel for the gawky creatures they hallow with their devotion.

Kedzie leaned forward to kiss the poor wretch good-by, but unfortunately (or fortunately), a restlessness seized him, he rolled over on his other side and one limp, floppy hand struck Kedzie on the nose.

She sprang back with a gasp of pain and hurried away, feeling abused and exiled.

At the studio she was received by Garfinkel with distinction. Ferriday came out to meet her with a shining morning face and led her to the office of the two backers.

A contract was waiting for her and the pen and ink were handy. Kedzie had never seen a contract before and she was as afraid of this one as if it were her death warrant. It was her life warrant, rather. She tried to read it as if she had signed dozens of contracts, but she fooled nobody. She could not make head or tail of "the party of the first part" and the terms exacted of movie actors. She understood nothing but the salary. One hundred dollars a week! That bloomed like a rose in the crabbed text. She would have signed almost anything for that.

The deed was finally done. Her hundred-odd pounds of flesh belonged to the Hyperfilm Company. The partners gave her their fat, warm hands to clasp. Ferriday wrung her palm with his long, lean fingers. Then he caught her by the elbow and whisked her into his studio. He began to describe her first scene in the

big production. The backers had insisted that she prove her ability as a minor character in a play featuring another woman. Kedzie did not mind, especially when Ferriday winked and whispered: "We'll make you make her look like something the cat brought in. First of all, those gowns of yours—you must get right at them."

She had told him of her ill luck the day before in finding Lady Powell-Carewe out. He sent her flying down again in his limousine. She stepped into it now with assurance. It was beginning to be her very own. At least she was beginning to own the owner.

She felt less excitement about the ride now that it was not her first. She noticed that the upholstery was frayed in spots. Other cars passed hers. The chauffeur was not so smart as some of the drivers. And he was alone. On a few of the swagger limousines there were two men in livery on the box. She felt rather ashamed of having only one.

Her haughty discontent fell from her when she arrived at Lady Powell-Carewe's shop. She became as humble as a waif climbing the steps of a palace. She wished she had not come alone. She did not know how to behave. And what in heaven's name did you call her, "Your Ladyship" or "Your Majesty" or what?

She walked in so meekly and was so simply clad that nobody in the place paid any heed to her at first. It was a very busy place, with girls rushing to and fro or sauntering limberly up and down in tremendously handsome gowns.

Kedzie could not pick out Lady Powell-Carewe. One of the promenaders was so tall and so haughty that Kedzie thought she must be at least a "Lady." She was in a silvery, shimmery green-and-gray gown, and the man whom the customers call "Mr. Charles" said:

"Madame calls this the Blown Poplar. Isn't it bully?"

Kedzie caught Mr. Charles' eye. He spoke to her sharply:

"Well?"

He evidently thought her somebody looking for a job as bundle-carrier. She was pretty, but there were so many pretty girls. They bored Mr. Charles to

death. He had a whole beagle-pack of them to care for.

Kedzie poked at him Ferriday's letter of introduction addressed to Lady Powell-Carewe. Mr. Charles took it and not knowing what it contained bore it into the other room without asking Kedzie to sit down.

He reappeared at the door and bowed to her with great amazement. She slipped into a chaotic room where there were heaps of fabrics thrown about like rubbish, long streamers of samples littering a desk full of papers.

A sumptuous creature of stately manner bowed creakily to Kedzie, and Kedzie said, trying to remember the pronunciation:

"Lady Pole-Carrier?"

A little plainly dressed woman replied:

"Yes, my child. So you're the Adair thing that Ferriday is gone half-witted over. He's just been talking my ear off about you. Sit down. Stop where you are. Let me see you. Turn around. I see." She turned to the stately dame. "Rather nice, isn't she, Mrs. Congdon? H'mm!"

She beckoned Kedzie to come close.

"What are your eyes like?" She lorgnetted the terrified girl, as if she were a throat-specialist. "Take off that horrid hat. Let me see your hair. H'mm! Rather nice hair, isn't it, Mrs. Congdon?—that is, if she knew how to do it. Let me see. Yes, I get your color, but it will be a job to suit you and that infernal movie-camera. It kills my colors so! I have to keep remembering that crimson photographs black and cream is dirty, and blue and yellow are just nothing."

Mr. Charles came in to say that Mrs. Noxon was outside. Kedzie recognized the great name with terror. Lady Powell-Carewe snapped:

"Tell the old camel I'm ill. I can't see her to-day. I'm ill to everybody to-day. I've taken a big job on."

This was sublime. To have aristocrats turned away for her!

WHILE Madame prowled among the fabrics and bit her lorgnon in study, Kedzie looked over the big albums filled with photographs of the creations of the

great creatrix. For Lady Powell-Carewe was a creative artist, taking her ideas where she found them in art or nature, and in revivals and in inventions. She took her color schemes from paintings, old and new, from jewels, landscapes. It was said that she went to Niagara to study the floods of color that tumble over its brink.

She began to interest herself in Kedzie, to wish to accomplish more than the mere selling of dress goods made up. She decided to create Kedzie as well as her clothes.

"Do you wear that pout all the time?" she asked.

"Do I pout?" Kedzie asked in an amazement.

"Don't pretend that you don't know it and do it intentionally. Also why do you Americans always answer a question by asking another?"

"Do we?" said Kedzie.

Lady Powell-Carewe decided that Kedzie was as short on brains as she was long on looks. But it was the looks that Lady Powell-Carewe was going to dress, and not the brains.

She ordered Kedzie to spend a lot of money having her hair cared for expertly.

She tried various styles on Kedzie, ordering her to throw off her frock and stand in her combination while Mrs. Congdon and Mr. Charles brought up armloads of silks and velvets and draped them on Kedzie as if she were a clothes-horse.

The feel of the crisp and whispering taffetas, the elevation of the brocades, the warm nothingness of the chiffons like wisps of fog, the rich dignity of the cloths, gave Kedzie rapture on rapture. Standing there with a burden of fabrics upon her and Lady Powell-Carewe kneeling at her feet pinning them up and tucking them here and there, Kedzie was reminded of those ancient days of six months gone when her mother used to kneel about her and fit on her the home-made school-dress cut out according to Butterick patterns. Now Kedzie had a genuine Lady at her feet. It was a triumph indeed. It was not hard now to believe that she would have all the world at her feet one day.



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Kedzie learned the tricks of the trade with magnificent speed. She was never so meek and helpless of expression as In the studio she was speedily recognized as an ambitious young woman, zealous for



when she slipped in front of another actor or actress and filled as much of the foreground as her slenderness permitted. self-advancement. In fact, they called her a "reel-hog" and a "glutton for footage."

Lady Powell-Carewe used Kedzie's frame as a mere standard to fly banners from. Leaving the head and shoulders to stand out like the wax bust of a wistful doll, she started a cloud of fabric about her in the most extravagant fashion. She reined it in sharply at the waist, but again it flared to such distances on all sides that Kedzie could never have sailed through any door but that of a garage without compression.

On this vast bell of silk she hung streamers of rosettes, flowers of colors that would have been strident if they had been the eighteenth of a shade stronger. As it was they were as delicious as cream curdled in a syrup of cherries. The whole effect would have been burlesque if it had not been the whim of a brilliant taste. Men would look at it and say, "Good Lord!" Women would murmur enviously, "Oh, Lord!" Kedzie's soul expanded to the ultimate fringe of the farthest furbelow.

When the fantasy was assured, Lady Powell-Carewe had Kedzie extracted from it. Then pondering her sapling slenderness, once more she caught from the air an inspiration. She would encase Kedzie in a sheath of soft white kid marked with delicate lines and set off with black gloves and a hat of green leaves. And this she would call "The White Birch."

And that was all the creating she felt up to for the day. She had Kedzie's measure taken in order to have a slip made as a model for use in the hours when Kedzie should be too busy to stand for fitting.

IT was well for Kedzie that there was a free ride waiting for her. Her journey to the studio was harrowed by the financial problem which has often tortured people in limousines. She did not like to ask Mr. Ferriday for money in advance. He might think she was poor. There is nothing that bankrupts the poor so much as the effort to look unconcerned while they wait for their next penny.

Kedzie was frantic with worry and was reduced to prayer. "Oh, Lord, send me some money somehow." The number

of such prayers going up to heaven must cause some embarrassment, since money can usually be given to one person only by taking it from another—and that other is doubtless praying for more at the very moment.

To Kedzie's dismay, when she arrived at the studio and asked for Mr. Ferriday, Mr. Garfinkel appeared. He was very deferential, but he was, after all, only a Garfinkel and she needed a Ferriday. He explained that his chief was very busy and had instructed Garfinkel to teach Miss Adair the science of make-up for the camera, to take test pictures of her and give her valuable hints in lens-behavior.

Late in the afternoon Ferriday came in to see the result of the first lesson. He said, "Much obliged, Garfinkel," and Garfinkel remembered pressing duty elsewhere.

His departure left Kedzie alone with Ferriday in a cavern pitch black save for the cone of light spreading from the little hole in the wall at the back, to the screen where the spray of light-dust became living pictures of Kedzie.

Kedzie did not know that the operator behind the wall could peek and peer while his picture-wheel rolled out the cataract of photographs. Ferriday was careful of her—or of himself. He held her hand, of course, and murmured to her how stunning she was, but he made no effort to make love, to her great comfort and regret.

At length he invited her to ride home in his limousine, but he did not invite her to dinner. She told herself that she would have had to decline. But she would have liked to be asked.

While he rhapsodized once more about her future she was thinking of her immediate penury. As she approached the street of her residence, she realized that she must either starve till pay-day or borrow. It was a bad beginning, but better than a hopeless ending. After several gasps of hesitation she finally made her plea:

"I'm awfully sorry to have to trouble you, Mr. Ferriday but I'm—er—well, could you lend me twenty-five dollars?"

"My dear child, take fifty," he cried.

THE story of Flanagan, a survivor of the good old days when the "third degree" was administered by those officers in need of exercise, and a man held down his beat until his night-stick broke. oo oo oo

The Old Stiff

By Frederick
R. Bechdolt

IT was one of those delicate situations which may turn the wrong way with a hair's-weight of bungling—one man in jail, his companion at large, the prisoner dumb on the subject of the robberies, and no identification which would go as evidence. There was just one ray of hope: the captured man was extremely nervous, as if he feared that perhaps treachery might send him to prison. To Captain of Detectives Walker it was evident that the whole affair hinged on capturing the second bandit alive and in good shape to talk: then there should be a race to turn state's evidence.

These early-evening robberies had roused the newspapers to deep black headlines—a fresh story every day. To clean up the case meant to turn growing criticism into praise for the modern department which Walker had been re-organizing along methods borrowed from New York, Paris and Scotland Yard; and the canny little Captain had been doing a great deal of hard work himself. Several busy days and all but sleepless nights had finally resulted in his getting a line on the wanted felon.



ILLUSTRATED BY
GAYLE HOSKINS

He had turned over the information to Speed and Willard, because it was good policy to let these two favorites of the Commission make an arrest of such importance.

The pair were waiting for their man on the street-corner where he was due to pass at this hour. They stood within a doorway while the stream of Saturday evening traffic went by them—two clean-built, smooth-shaven young men *without* square toes, derby hat or rubber heels. Politically strong under a civil-service system where keen head-work had begun replacing strong arms, they had grown a little sleek on pleasant office details; perhaps their wits were quicker at intrigue than at action.

At any rate, their man had passed them before they were aware of it; and before they had taken twenty steps after him, the bullet-headed suspect dodged between two speeding autos and then caught a jitney racing in the opposite direction. By the time the young upper-

office men had commandeered a car, the quarry had managed to shift into the evening sidewalk-throng and vanish. Reporting in by 'phone a half-hour later, the detectives learned that the fifteenth drug-store hold-up had been pulled off while they were combing down the stream of traffic in their fruitless effort to pick up the broken trail. The Captain had sent out old Jerry Flanagan to investigate.

Speed hung up the receiver and told the news to Willard with an oath. "Captain says back to the office and see Flanagan's report. Maybe," he added bitterly, "the old stiff has fallen over something and remembered it long enough to write it down."

"If he has, he wont know how to spell it." Willard smiled unpleasantly.

They caught a car to the Hall of Justice and sat among the passengers, unobtrusive, unnoticed, as ordinary and businesslike a pair as ever melted into a crowd. Under their breaths they vented their disappointment, chiefly by comments on the inefficiency of Jerry Flanagan, who by the grace of a close mouth and politics clung to the upper-office force, a survivor of the good old days when the third degree was administered by those officers in need of exercise, and a man held down his own beat until his night-stick broke—then trusted to his handcuffs as brass knuckles.

Flanagan was in the assembly-room writing out his report when they passed through it on their way to the Captain's inner office. Out of the sides of their eyes they saw him, sprawled over the desk, his full-jowled face a deep crimson from his exertions, the end of his tongue protruding from the corner of his mouth under the stubby red mustache, his thick fingers hiding the penholder.

"It's a pick he ought to be handling—not a pen," Willard growled.

"If he didn't have enough low-down stuff tucked away in that bone-head of his to blow up the whole department, he would be swinging a pick—or driving a truck." Speed checked himself as the door swung open. "Evening, Captain," both men saluted in unison.

Behind his wide, polished oaken desk Captain Walker acknowledged the salute

with a stiff military gesture. He wore nose-glasses; and were it not for his uniform, he might have been taken for a lawyer; in those old days of Jerry Flanagan's he couldn't have made the force by three inches and forty pounds.

"Well?" He swung half around in his swivel-chair and took up a gutta-percha ruler. "You picked him up and lost him."

"And while we were looking for him," Speed replied, "he evidently turned this stick-up."

"That's why I sent for you—to make dead sure it *is* the man; for this time there's a pretty good description. And"—the Captain frowned—"I've some more information for you. We've spotted the house where he rooms." He pulled a memorandum-slip from a desk-drawer. "Seven hundred and ninety Laguna; it's the bay-window room on the second floor. Flanagan's report ought to be in now; I told him to bring it right to me. He's—"

"Writing it when we came through." Speed preserved a wooden expression, but his voice was full of weary disgust.

Walker shrugged his shoulders. "There wasn't anyone else around when the news came in. Sit down; you may as well wait here. Flanagan *isn't* swift when it comes to writing."

"Or anything else," Willard told Speed under his breath.

After a few minutes had gone by, Speed, who had been fidgeting and glancing at his watch, spoke up: "All we need is the description. Then, if it's this man, we can go out to the room and grab him." Willard nodded and glanced at the Captain, for whom the hint was intended; but Walker continued reading an evening paper; and the two detectives lapsed to sotto-voce abuse of Flanagan.

"I suppose," Speed muttered, "the old stiff will be trying to horn in on the case now, on the strength of investigating this stick-up—wanting the prisoner booked to him, too, when we make the pinch. Him! He couldn't catch smallpox in the pesthouse."

"Hasn't turned a hand in the last two months, only to beat up an old ex-con he ran against on the water-front last week."

Presently Captain Walker pressed his electric desk-button; and to the blue-clad corporal who responded he directed: "Tell Flanagan to come in right away with that report."

A MOMENT later Flanagan loomed in the doorway—thick-bodied, thick-necked, heavy-jowled, with the inevitable square-toed shoes and derby hat, the glaring diamond and smooth, dark overcoat of his breed. In one hand he held the report, and he was still breathing heavily.

desk and became intent. Speed grinned openly at Willard, but old Flanagan merely shoved his grizzled, cropped head a little forward with a bull-like movement and stared at the opposite wall.

"Tell me," — the Captain of Detectives was speaking evenly, but there was a



The
fifteenth drug-store
hold-up was pulled off while the detect-
ives were combing down the stream of traffic
in their fruitless effort to pick up the broken trail.

He swung the other hand toward his forehead in a gesture such as a trained bear would make if ordered to salute; then he laid the paper on Captain Walker's desk and started for the door again.

"Wait a bit, Jerry." Walker pointed to a chair. "There may be something." He was already reading, and as he went on doing so, a frown gathered between his brows. The frown deepened. He planted both elbows on the wide-topped

rasp in his voice which made Jerry straighten in his chair, — "what does *f-u-t* mean?"

"*F-u-t* — *fut*?" Jerry nodded and added: "Sure; that's it. Shot him in the *fut*."

"Shot who in the foot?" Walker demanded acidly. "Who shot and who *was* shot? Hang it, Flanagan!" He shoved aside the report and sat back in his chair. "I can't make this out at all. Tell us what happened."

"Why, just as I wrote *ut*." Flanagan shoved forward his head again with that bull-like movement. "This guy blows

into the drug-store. What's the number? 'Tis there, written down. Well, the druggist is standin' behint the counter clost to the cash-register an' luks up when the guy has shoved a 'rod' under his face. The druggist starts to rough ut, an' whilst they're mixin', the stick-up turns loose an' drills him 'rough the fut—as I wrote ut—an' then clouts him alongside the jor an' he goes out—see? When he comes to, the yegg has beat ut. But siveral parties has seen um, an' wan of them gives me a description—five-fut-tin, or mebbe ilivin, black crush hat, blue handkerchief fer a mask, *an'* a dark suit."

"Our man, all right," said Speed decisively, and Willard nodded. Old Flanagan said nothing, but it was evident from the quick sidelong movement of his little eyes that he considered the personal pronoun as including himself—whether the speaker did or not. Noting that expression, the two younger detectives arose, their lips pressed tight.

"We'll be off, Captain," they announced, saluting.

"Out to the room?" Walker raised his eyes from that report of Jerry's. "All right. Now listen: no rough work; we got to have him fit to talk." His face showed the effect of the two-weeks strain; his eyes were very earnest as he returned their salute.

Flanagan stood like a block of granite in the middle of the floor, and when they had shut the door behind them he growled: "I'll be reportin' out now. I gotta line o' me own on this guy."

This Walker knew as well as Jerry to be merely the latter's way of declaring himself in on the case, and he allowed irritability to get the better of him.

"Next time you write out a report," said he coldly, "try and word it so that people can understand what it's about. It didn't take much of an examination to land on the force when you made it, Flanagan."

Jerry's face retained its granitic expression as he answered slowly: "In them days they didn't bother their heads so much about a man's bein' able to write as they did wit' his bein' able to fight." With this he delivered the bearlike salute and departed flat-footedly.

Captain Walker frowned down at the report for some moments; then he shoved it away from him with a weary gesture. "Anyhow," he mused, "we're soon rid of him."

It had all been arranged; the weeding out of dead timber was to be completed at the next meeting of the Commission, by the removal of this last dry-rotted trunk. The task had not been easy; even in this latter-day administration, when politics was played more politely and men had less to fear in the way of exposed secrets than in the old days, it had required much waiting and considerable manipulation. But now—Captain Walker opened his desk-drawer and took out a folded paper at which he looked with satisfaction; it was his formal charges, carefully typed for presentation to the Commission, whose members had been polled and stood pledged to dismiss Jerry Flanagan from the force—the excuse being that brutality down on the water-front of which Willard had spoken a few minutes ago.

TIMES had altered, and even old Flanagan, who used to have access to large mines of hidden information, was in complete ignorance of the pending event. Out through the assembly-room and down the corridor to the street Flanagan proceeded with the slowness of one who can never get over the old round-the-block swagger. He was not angry over what had just been said in his presence. Complete faith in that extinct underground influence—his "long drag"—which heretofore had kept him secure in his job gave him a feeling of gentle contempt for such superiors as the Captain of Detectives. And Walker's broad sarcasm had failed to penetrate his armorlike skin.

Yet Flanagan was chafing. Making out that report had been enough to enrage him; he loathed writing; it left his fingers aching and his collar wilting. He didn't like the looks of Speed and Willard; their assurance exasperated him; their speech—without a trace of argot, like the speech of ordinary human beings—to his mind smacked of ignorance; the constant recurrence of their names on the city-prison blotter oppo-

site the names of badly wanted felons was a source of dislike to him. *His* name wasn't there more than once a month. These two sharp-faced, slim-built young men were by-products of a new generation—a successful generation from which he was separated by a wide gulf of years, a gulf dug deeper by reform and progress. And as he left the Hall of Justice, he was thinking of the thing of which they had reminded him, the everlasting system: card-indices, finger-prints, morning show-up, a third degree where you had to use your wits instead of your fists. He couldn't understand it, couldn't begin to grasp its methods; and he longed for the old days when the stool-pigeons used to clutter up the corridor about the entrance of the upper office—when a man didn't waste his time shadowing crooks but hammered his information out of some shuddering ex-convict and then went out and got the criminal. In those days he had been successful; now he was—

"Those two young dicks think I'm an old stiff," he reflected. "Them, wit' their room they're goin' to shadow! Gettin' cold turkey off'n the Captain and afraid I'm a-goin' to cop their information. I'd like to grab this guy meself; that's wot I'd like to do."

It was the stirring of ambition, long forgotten but still smoldering, the same ambition which had made him maltreat many a hapless wretch and fight his way through many ugly odds. Striving to gratify it, he proceeded up the street at that slow swagger until he reached a side thoroughfare where lights flared on a pavement crowded by seekers after dubious pleasure. Here many knew him and nodded as he passed—a loudly dressed parasite, a lean-faced barker proclaiming vice on exhibition for slumming parties, a pair of wide-shouldered, big-footed patrolmen—survivors of his day and stationed on duty in this free-fight zone,—a slinking drug-fiend who strove to dive into an alleyway and whined when Flanagan's heavy hand fell on his bony shoulder.

He didn't know anything; he hadn't seen anyone; he swore in thin, wailing crescendo and by memories of decency long forgotten, that he hadn't a shred

of information—save this: he wanted money for the drug. He pleaded, and Flanagan left him writhing in his supplications.

"An' he used to be a fly once," Jerry muttered. "Yah! Wot's things comin' to!"

So by glaring sidewalk amid the discords of blaring music and by shadowed alley where furtive forms slunk through the dark, he continued his search for an informant—a fruitless quest; the day was gone when one could procure news by the old strong-arm methods; the underworld was revolving before new forces. At last he sought a gloomy cross-street leading toward the city's heart. Here, as the night grew late, there sometimes passed the garroter and the highwayman, drug-crazed to the murder point; and he hoped—

"I could grab wan o' them, dead to rights," he reasoned, "an' make him come t'rough wit' everything he knew. M'ght be wan would have a line on this guy."

But no potential felon came his way, and he abandoned this desperate venture at last. Still the old flame of ambition burned on, fanned by restlessness and dislike; and he swaggered leisurely away to other thoroughfares which led him to the saloon of a one-time bail-bond broker.

"Pete in?" he asked the bartender, and went on to the office whither that white-aproned servitor pointed. There in a leather-upholstered chair he settled down to tell his troubles to the hard-faced power of a bygone generation. But that power was, like himself, a mere survivor of the past; of necessity the talk shifted from the subject of Jerry's quest; and the two men sat in the quiet little office, growling out of the corners of their mouths until the hour came when Flanagan must report in by telephone. He took down the receiver from its hook and got the Hall of Justice.

"Come in," the operator barked as soon as he had announced his name, "—as fast as you can. You're wanted."

UNAWARE that the strategy of a twentieth-century detective-department had made a man-trap of his room,

the bandit was coming to his bed. Since the arrest of his companion he had roamed the city, his every sense alert against surprise. So now he entered the lodging-house, as silent as a cat, slunk down the hallway to the foot of the flight and climbed the stairs, his fingers twitching toward the butt of his revolver. His door faced the landing, and the place was dark; a shadow in the shadows, he stooped, turning the key.

Some one was moving. The brushing of a sleeve against a coat's fabric proclaimed the ambush to his attuned ears. Save that his hard eyes narrowed and his jaws clamped tighter, he did not alter the poise of a single muscle, but without quickening or hesitation he finished unlocking, withdrew the key, cast one despairing glance toward the stairs and then—

Simultaneously with the turning of the knob, he whirled on his heel; his right hand flicked to his waistband and swung forward weighted with a big-caliber revolver the muzzle of which spat a stream of fire even as its owner was leaping backward through the opened door. The lock snapped to.

Into the smoke-filled silence came a voice: "Walk out of that with your hands up; we're officers." Willard hurled the order like a threat; a leaden slug flattened by the door's woodwork snarled answer into his ear; within the tight room the revolver bellowed like a shotgun. The two detectives drew closer to each other on the landing.

"Say! This fellow's a bad one!" Speed announced that discovery in a whisper, but his intonation proclaimed the fact that he considered it in the light of a personal grievance.

"Shut up!" Willard gripped his partner by the arm. "What are we going to do? He's not coming out!"

They glanced at the portion of the blackness which the door filled; but neither man took a step in that direction or so much as leaned his shoulder toward the barrier. Speed backed away a little; Willard edged beside him: "Aw; we got him safe, anyhow. I'll keep the room covered from this side; you slip down to the box and—"

Speed was departing already. On tip-

toe Willard sought a safer point of vantage. So, while the entrapped quarry licked his lips awaiting onset, one sharp-faced young upper-office man was installing himself at the foot of the stairs and the other was unlocking the Game-well box down on the street-corner.

That corner was diagonally across from the lodging-house; and as he was slipping the key into the little iron door, Speed looked over his shoulder—to discover that the second-floor bay window was staring down at him. The bell tinkled its responsive signal as he flung the door open, and he swore softly at the necessity which compelled him to turn his eyes to the mechanism in front of him.

With the intention of informing headquarters exactly what had taken place, he took down the telephone-receiver and held it to his ear while his imagination told him that a long time was passing. No response came from the central station. With fervency he voiced his opinions concerning derelict desk-sergeants—glanced swiftly round over his shoulder toward that bay window, hung up the receiver and seized the signal-lever. This mechanism moved across a dial on which were marked three stations, the first designated a slow wagon call, the second a hurry-up summons, the third a riot-call. He jerked the lever to the last, heard the comforting whir which announced that the machinery of a modern police-department was being galvanized into action, slammed the door shut and expeditiously got around the corner out of range.

Five minutes later the highwayman's lips flew back in a snarl at a familiar and hated sound; he leaped from the doorway where he had been crouching and peered through the window at the clanging covered vehicle which was swooping round the corner. It stopped, and—

"Wot!" shouted the highwayman with an oath of astonishment. "It's rainin' bulls!"

He raised the sash, rested his revolver on the sill—and had emptied it before the flat-capped, blue-clad platoon began awakening that portion of the city with their first answering volley.



Simultaneously with the turning of the knob, he whirled on his heel; his right hand flicked to his waistband and swung forward weighted with a big-caliber revolver the muzzle of which spat a stream of fire even as its owner was leaping backward through the opened door.

The lieutenant in charge of that platoon got an exaggerated idea of the bay-window room's contents; Speed's greeting conveyed a hazy impression of a narrow escape from desperate odds; this impression was immediately strengthened by the presence of two wounded officers asprawl in the gutter. Being versed in those Continental tactics which up-to-date American departments have begun borrowing with the idea of reducing the number of police funerals, the lieutenant devoted his energies to entrenching the remainder of his forces behind convenient shelters—soon after which the astounded fugitive began to hear the rip of leaden slugs through woodwork, the tinkle of broken window-glass, the intermittent *pop-pop* of rifles and revolvers.

"I'm up against the whole damn' town," diagnosed the wanted man; and rising to the occasion, he concentrated his senses on sharpshooting.

And then the siege went on according to modern methods—which discourage wasting the lives of officers.

The detective-department and the central station, into which latter that riot-call had come, being practically independent organizations, it was a good half-hour before Captain Walker learned what was taking place. He was still on his way to the scene in a high-powered automobile when all the windows for a block down one side of Laguna Street began spouting rifle-fire in a final, huge, concerted effort to exterminate the man upon whose capture alive he had been pinning all his hopes. Arriving during a brief interval between volleys, he heard a strange cry from among the besiegers and saw a bulky figure emerging from the shelter of an areaway; the figure advanced into the street, and the firing was resumed.

RESPONDING to that urgent telephone-summons, Detective Sergeant Jerry Flanagan was drafted into the last reserves who were sent out to wind up the affair. Mechanically he took unto himself the rifle which a perspiring sergeant shoved into his hands, and clambered ponderously up the steps of the waiting wagon. The engine roared;

the black-covered vehicle shot out into the street and charged down it like a runaway locomotive. Within its dusky interior other rifle-barrels gleamed; the rattle of the butts mingled with the mutter of voices. Jerry scowled as he turned to his flat-capped neighbor.

"Say, wot's doin', anyhow?" he demanded.

"Search me." The other shook his head. "They called in all the men from inside beats; this is the fourth wagon out now."

"Four wagons!" Jerry swore and eyed his rifle with deep disfavor. "Anywan wud think we was goin' to war," he ruminated heavily. "Jist as I was busy on a case, too!"

The wagon reached a level street and swung into a forty-mile gait—reeled round a corner and stopped so abruptly that Jerry literally overwhelmed that slim-built neighbor. Recovering himself, he heard a sharp voice: "All out. Hurry, there!"

He clambered down into an alleyway. Somewhere beyond the buildings at whose rear he was standing there sounded a brisk spattering of small-arm fire. A central-station lieutenant, immaculate in his semi-military uniform, jerked his head toward the back door of the nearest house. "This way, now." They followed him through a disordered kitchen and down into a basement, through which they tramped to a front entrance, emerging into an open area-way below street-level.

Holding his rifle by the barrel with its stock over his shoulder—as though that weapon were a shovel—Jerry elbowed his way among those members of the squad who had come before him; he failed to notice the presence of Detective Sergeant Speed, who had sought out this strategic position early in the proceedings, and to whom the lieutenant was giving instructions.

"I'll jist see wot ut's all about now," Jerry told himself.

A flight of concrete stairs led down from the sidewalk to this sheltered landing; he shoved aside a half-dozen blue-clad patrolmen, reached the lowest step and thrust his grizzled head over the coping. The street was empty of hu-

manity for a four-block space, at either end of which he could distinguish the black bulk of a watching crowd, the murmur of which came down the wind, spasmodically, like the murmur of remote surf. As he was gazing heavily over the deserted thoroughfare, a bullet spatted upon the stone sidewalk a yard or so away and snarled, ricocheting past him. He caught sight of a little wisp of tenuous vapor floating out from a second-floor bay window just across the way. The glass was gone; the sashes were hanging in splinters; the sill was chewed by concerted rifle-fire.

The lieutenant had finished his instructions to Speed and had departed; the sharp-faced young detective-sergeant began repeating the order to the squad: "Now, men, when I give the word, start pumping lead into that room, and—" He paused at the sound of the solitary shot; and seeing Jerry's outthrust head and shoulders, yelled: "Hey! Get down, there! You'll be killed." He leaped toward Flanagan and seized him by the elbow.

Just then the whole street reverberated to the discharge of firearms, and Jerry saw a dozen buildings spouting orange flashes toward that desolate bay window. He withdrew his head, scowling; comprehension had not yet begun to dawn upon him.

"Wot," he demanded, "is ut, annyhow?" He peered under his shaggy brows into the face of the younger man and saw how it was working with excitement.

"Look out, I tell you!" Speed's voice was pitched high. "That fellow's a bad one. He nearly got me through the door awhile back. He's sent two to the hospital already."

"Who is he? How many's in his gang?" Jerry all but brained two of his companions as he swung the rifle from his shoulder.

"He's been standing off half the department," Speed went on with the vigor of one who would justify himself with himself. "He shoots like—"

"Say!" Jerry interrupted in a low voice, "is there only *wan* of him?"

"Hang it! Get your head down—out of sight. It's that drug-store bandit;

we're going to—" Speed ended in a yell as the butt of Jerry's rifle, abandoned for all time by its bearer, crashed down upon his foot. That outcry of pain changed abruptly into one of bewilderment, which turned into a shout of warning, the whole creating the weird effect which startled Captain Walker upon that official's arrival. Detective Sergeant Flanagan was climbing the concrete stairs to the street-level.

His pace was ponderous, but there was that in the attitude of his wide shoulders, something in the forward thrust of his thick neck, which gave an air of tremendous sureness—as if Jerry knew exactly where he was going and what he was going after.

And this was, in fact, the case. It was not often in these latter years of his service that he devoted his energies to hard work; and the knowledge that all this evening's efforts had not been in vain, that the quarry was still uncaught, —nay, more, within actual reach,—came to him as unbelievably good news. Without delaying to puzzle over the unaccountable shortsightedness which had made these others abide on one side of the street when the wanted man was on the other, he started forth to execute the only strategic movement which he had learned in the brutal old days.

"I'll jist grab that guy meself before some wan else does ut an' cops the credit."

With this Napoleonic determination he shoved forward his head like a bull and according to the habit of his breed, became deaf to everything outside of that single purpose, blind to all objects beyond the straight line which led to its fulfillment.

Alone in the deserted street he loomed, thick-bodied, wide of shoulder, coming on like a charging bull. His derby hat was jammed down over his little eyes; his arms were crooked, his big fists swinging in grim rhythm before his clumsy waistline.

He crossed the sidewalk, stepped down from the curb, took one brief upward glance to get his bearings and headed straight toward the open doorway under that bay window. A streak of flame yearned toward him from the



Beneath the window-sill the two men wrestled while passing death fanned their faces, snarling accompaniment to their oaths two feet above their heads.

shattered sash; the bullet struck the asphalt almost in front of him and went whining by. Undeviating, he increased his pace, as though the shot had been a bidding.

Before the highwayman could improve his aim, a volley crashed from the windows across the street. He fired thrice in quick succession; two bullets gouged holes from the asphalt; the third chance shot knocked the derby askew upon that outthrust head, leaving the crown a perforated ruin. Flanagan lurched on at the same clumsy, swaggering run.

In the entrance of the lodging-house Flanagan drew his service revolver. At the foot of the stairs he collided with a man, and Detective Sergeant Willard, who had risen from his sheltered station at the noise of those flat feet, found himself swept aside by a back-handed blow which crumpled him breathless against the wall.

Three steps at a time Jerry charged up the flight; nor did he pause on the upper landing, but launched himself upon the first barrier which he had discovered between him and the wanted man. The door fell inward. Amid a shower of shattered woodwork, he crashed straight to his goal.

Caught completely by surprise,—for even after witnessing that solitary sally he expected nothing less than a mass movement at close quarters,—the highwayman found no time to use hisreckless weapon before the bulk of his assailant overbore him. Now, as their bodies met and their arms flew round each other, there was no further chance for shooting. They rolled upon the floor, limb intertwined with limb.

The room was a dismal ruin—gaping windows and litter of splintered glass on the carpet; pocked walls and furrowed plaster showed on all sides. Even yet—for few of the besiegers had beheld Jerry's charge and there had been no time for countermanding orders—the air here was filled with the angry buzzing of steel-jacketed bullets; their sharp *sput* mingled with the rustle of dislodged fragments as they buried themselves in the partitions.

Beneath the window-sill the two men

wrestled while passing death fanned their faces, snarling accompaniment to their oaths two feet above their heads. Like some unwieldy animal in its final spasm, they bounded off the floor, fell back, rolled over; then Jerry placed his knee in the stomach of his prisoner while he snapped the handcuffs home.

"Come on now, you,"—his voice was heavy, impassive,—“or else I'll beat your head off.”

Together they crept to the landing; and before Detective Sergeant Willard had sufficiently recovered his breath to realize what had taken place, they passed him in the lower hallway. As they emerged from its entrance into the glare of the street-light, Jerry's face was expressionless under the ruins of his derby hat. Nor did he show any human emotion during the ovation which accompanied their progress to the nearest of the waiting patrol-wagons. But down in the city prison, when they were booking the captured bandit, his granitic countenance did relax just a trifle.

"Who," the desk-sergeant asked, "is he booked to?"

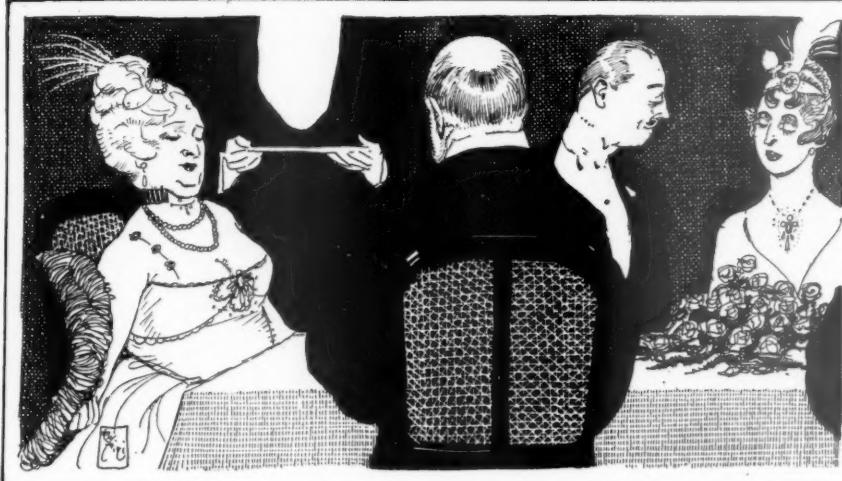
There came then into Jerry's little eyes a gleam, and a trace of heavy satisfaction crept into his lip ends as he made answer:

"Why, to me—Detective Sergeant Flanagan."

Down in the upper-office assembly-room Speed and Willard were doing considerable loud talking, explaining the desperate nature of their portion of the proceedings.

In his own inner office Captain Walker sat silent behind his wide, polished desk; he was ruminating over certain necessities which had arisen out of this evening's unexpected developments. For some time he did not move. At length he shook his head and opened a drawer from which he took that carefully typed set of charges which was to have gone to the Police Commission at its next meeting. Slowly he tore the folded paper into strips, and the strips into fragments, which he dropped into the wastebasket. Then he smiled, and a flicker of admiration leaped into his eyes as he whispered slowly: "The—old—stiff!"

Of course, the meal was just a rough, thrown-together snack, as Mrs. Si



GOOD FISHING

ILLUSTRATED BY

YOU realize how little God thinks of money," said Sammy Vail, "when you consider the people He's given it to."

I had returned to my rooms at midnight to find Sammy in my easiest chair, smoking a cigar and gazing thoughtfully at the ceiling.

"Your epigram has a familiar ring," I told him. "You read it in a book. Besides, if you are referring to me, I haven't any money."

Sammy's frank, gray eyes opened wide. "You? Of course not. I was thinking of the Quimbys. The St. John Quimbys. Ever meet them?"

"Never," said I.

"Lucky—you are. Rich—rotten rich, the Quimbys. And a nice, human little

family that reminds you of Mount Blanc at five o'clock on a January morning."

"Ugh! Why think of them?"

"Can't help it." Sammy smiled. "They've just done me a service—a whopping big service, though never meaning to. So I think of them, one and all: of St. John himself—Sin Jin she calls him when she remembers him—little, gray spats, clubs, the soul of a rabbit; of Maude, the daughter, proud, haughty, unlovely, but stylish and *Vogue*-like; and especially of her—of Mrs. Sin Jin—in her breast all the love of the rabble that moved Marie Antoinette. Dame of the Revolution, she is—some Dame—some Dame."

Sammy lighted another of my cigars. He seemed to have considerable on his mind. Reflectively he laid down the match and took an envelope from his pocket.

"Funny, isn't it," he went on, "how a little piece of paper like this can change the course of a man's life? Send him

THIS story has to do with an engagement ring that cost three thousand dollars if it cost a cent. You are not compelled to believe the tale. Frankly, we didn't.

Sin Jin intimated, served roughly by Wadleigh, the Quimby butler.



By Earl Derr Biggers

Author of "Seven Keys to Baldpate," "The Agony Column," etc.

ALEXANDER POPINI

flying to Hong Kong or Newark, make him a fortune in Wall Street or open his eyes to the presence in the same block of a girl! Er—read it."

He handed the envelope over. It was a wealthy-looking missive; even the stamp seemed redder than most. The note-paper inside was top-heavy with monogram, and underneath I read:

Dear Mr. Vail:

We are spending the month of August at our houseboat on Lake Asquewan. Roughing it,—if you know what I mean,—wearing disreputable clothes, behaving most informally, getting back to nature with a rush. We should be delighted to have you run up, any time, for as long as you care to stay. Just let us know your train, and we'll see that you're met at the Junction. Do come.

The note was signed "*Helene Quimby.*"

"There's a postscript," said Sammy.

I read aloud: "P. S. Good fishing."

"She said something there," laughed Sammy. "Good fishing! Yes, Mrs. Sin

Jin Quimby dipped her pen in the bottle of Truth when she wrote those last two words."

I handed back the letter.

"Just whither," I inquired, "are we drifting?"

Sammy gazed again at the ceiling.

"I hope it's a nice day next Thursday," he remarked.

"Why?"

"Because," said Sammy slowly, "I'm going to be married."

"Married?" I cried. "Next Thursday?"

"I know it's sudden," he answered, "—sudden for all of us, including me. That's why I've been trying to lead up to it gently. That's why I brought this three-weeks-old letter from Mrs. Sin Jin

JUST the same, Mr. Biggers, a very truthful person, declares that he has set the story to paper in just the words Mr. Sammy Vail used in telling it to him.

—for the great venture began the morning I got that."

"You don't mean Maud—the proud and haughty—"

"You bet I don't. Maud plus money—or should I say money minus Maud—is a combination that has agitated several bosoms—but not mine. No, sir. I'm about to marry the neatest, sweetest—but you'll see her next Thursday, at her mother's house in Flushing, when you come down to be best man. You're elected, you know."

"Delighted. But suppose you begin at the beginning, and tell me just what has happened."

"Aye-aye," said Sammy. "Good fishing. Listen."

And he spoke :

MY law practice (said Sammy), as you know, is nine-tenths watchful waiting at any time, but if it's quiet in the winter, it's absolutely silent in the summer. So on the third of August—memorable date!—I sat in my office with nothing to do, wondering about the rent as usual, and wishing I had money in the bank so I could run away to one of the gay seaside colonies we read about in the Sunday papers. And at that point *clickety-click* through my letter-slot came this epistle from Mrs. St. John Quimby, with its message of cool waters, whispering trees and fish pining for the hook.

I never liked the Quimbys. And I felt sure that the talk about roughing it was pitiful bunk—that, in fact, things aboard that houseboat were probably as informal and rough as the Court of Saint James the day the brewer's daughter is presented. On the other hand, I wanted a vacation, had no money to take it—and here was little Sin Jin ready to squander a bit of cash he inherited on giving me three or more meals a day and a surcease from New York.

So I boarded a train going north. It looked like a long, tiresome trip, and then in the parlor-car I met Marian Paine. She sort of broke the journey—broke it up into little bits of heaven—I never saw a girl work so neatly before. I'd met her several times at the Quimbys', and I'd been a bit interested in her until Mrs. Quimby whispered to me that the

girl had millions of her own. Then—er—well, I don't want to be accused of mixing business with pleasure when I marry. So I turned away. But on this train I backslid a little—I noticed again that her eyes were hard not to look into, and other features and extras. She was bound for the houseboat too.

Well, the train slipped along, mile after mile, each mile costing me two cents railroad fare I couldn't afford, and I not remembering it, Marian Paine being that kind of girl. Along about dusk we got down at Asquewan Junction.

William and James were there in the big French car to meet us. They were roughing it in the regular, monogrammed uniform of the Quimbys, and they looked as rough as a Louis Quinze chair, and as human. William sent James over for our credentials, and having passed on them, himself condescended to open the door of the car. In fact, he almost spoke to us. We got in, and the car started.

It was one of those nights. The moon hung up above, like a new silver dollar, lending cheer and encouragement. I leaned back on those cushions, and was on the point of remarking "Aint it lovely to be rich?" but I remembered in time that it isn't the thing to mention money to people who have it. She sat there beside me, Marian did, her eyes bright, her cheeks red—and the moon was pouring silver into her lap like a doting father. I kept looking at her and wishing she didn't have all that money. It was that kind of night.

We reached the lake altogether too soon, and there loitering by the shore was the Quimby houseboat *Quiet Days*—a mere shack of ten or twelve rooms. Our hosts greeted us. They emphasized the rough informality of it all—emphasized it in faultless evening attire that would have done credit to the Ritz. I took a look at them and was glad I hadn't brought a single stitch of clothing other than everything wearable I possessed.

Dinner was at seven, they told us—there was really not much to do and one might as well dine early. I hurried off to my room and got into my most uncomfortable clothes so as not to be conspicuous. All the time I was dressing, with the aid of a valet I hoped to see

drown before the close of my stay, I heard the lap of the waters outside and reflected on the bully time I might have been on the brink of, if the Quimbys had been regular people. Even the thought of Marian Paine didn't cheer me. For she had all that money, and I was broke. It was the hour of depression and regret that always overtakes a man who has just rushed gladly away from the hot city to the glorious country.

THE dinner cheered things. The Quimbys have a new French chef, and the boy is good. Also there was a lot of hothouse conversation that is always amusing if you look at it right. Of course, the meal was just a rough, thrown-together snack, as Mrs. Sin Jin intimated, served roughly by Wadleigh, the Quimby butler. Once, in 1882, Wadleigh's hair got rumpled. He's bald now, and doesn't have to worry for fear the thing will repeat on him.

There was, as I say, conversation. People talked continuously, and oftener than you'd think somebody said something. That girl Marian Paine—but there were other guests: a little chap from Philadelphia, Melville Laceby, and his wife. Money—they looked like the annual report of the directors of the First National. And a man about town—there are a whole lot of things about town I don't like—named Davis. Last and not far from least was Clarence.

It seemed Clarence had gone and got himself engaged to Maude Quimby. Why? I don't know. His father is a leather-importer, or ivory. Yes, ivory, I think. Clarence will have a great head for the business. Well, he'd gone and done it, though he's got all kinds of money himself. And Maud was almost polite to him; I suppose she likes him—or did. Anyhow, she wore the biggest and brightest engagement ring I ever saw. I heard Mrs. Laceby tell Marian Paine after dinner that it cost three thousand if it cost a cent. I mention these details with a purpose. They all have to do with good fishing.

After dinner, the old stuff—back with the rugs, get out the phonograph. The giddy soul who invented dancing did the rich host a great favor. It removes

the strain of entertaining from the head to the feet. Later I sat with Miss Paine, and we heard the soft lap of the waves and the sedate splash of the servants bathing at their certified bathing beach to the left of the boat. It seemed that moonlight bathing was a pleasant feature of the rough life. We didn't do any that night. We made up for that later.

The valet acted as though he intended to sleep in my room, but I dissuaded him. He went away, crestfallen. Night, and the stars, the soft lap of the waters aforesaid and the snore of Sin Jin echoing down the corridor! I slept and dreamed that Marian Paine was so rich she had Sin Jin for a butler.

The next morning at breakfast Mrs. Sin Jin suddenly inquired what we wanted to do. No one seemed to want to do anything if he could get out of it; so just to help the hostess out, I mentioned fishing.

"Of course," she said, regarding me with stern approval, "you must fish. I'll have Perkins accompany you. First, I presume you will want to get into your fishing-togs."

I hadn't any fishing-togs. I took a chance and said so. "I guess it will be all the same to the fish," I added, aiming at lightness and banter. "No doubt," replied Mrs. Sin Jin coldly, in a voice that suggested I was quite, quite in error there.

Marian Paine said she would come with me, and fishing began to look up.

It looked down again when Perkins hove in view, haughtily chaperoning a motor-launch filled with paraphernalia of the angler.

"Will you step in, sir?" he inquired, in a tone that added without words, "—or shall I have to come up there and get you?"

I assisted Miss Paine—Marian—down and followed. We separated from *Quiet Days* and plowed out into the lake.

Perkins, who was a footman, but doubled as guide,—and I may add he was a good dresser on and off,—arranged a couple of easy-chairs for us and baited our hooks. Then he put a pole into the care of each of us and stood at attention.

"If you will be so good as to let me know at the first suggestion of a tug,"



We climbed aboard. Clarence seemed to swim mostly in one spot, and he kept an eager eye on us. "Now you see," said Marian, "we can't possibly keep it. Clarence wants it back."

he remarked, "I shall, of course, pull in the fish for you."

And he stood there, waiting for the tug, with a special tin box marked "Fish" all ready. It was enough to make the gods laugh.

"Great stuff, this roughing it," I said to Marian, and I want to tell you that if there hadn't been a twinkle in her eye just then I wouldn't be here with my

big story to-night. But the twinkle was there—more, it developed into a very beautiful and understanding smile. So we sat and fished.

The tug was slow in coming, and I got to thinking of the old days back home in the little town out in Indiana, when I used to sit on the bank and fish for minnows, without any footman at my elbow, and without any elbow in my

shirt. I mentioned those days to Marian Paine, and added that if I had a boy I'd want him to grow up in a town like that, where money is scarce, and footmen are unknown. And she told me that she'd feel the same way about any boy of hers, and the sun shone on her hair and sort of—well, you're beginning to follow me, I guess.

Two hours passed, and still the fish refused to bite—perhaps they resented my lack of the proper togs. Perkins stood there at attention—he gave me a black look when I asked him to sit—stood with nothing in all the bright blue world to lean on, and not even able to lift a foot from time to time, being John J. Dignified himself. I got tireder and tireder watching him, and finally, all worn out, I suggested we give it up. So Perkins took us back to the boat, the tin box marked *Fish* rattling all the way, sort of human and mad and empty.

Getting anxious for something to happen? Man, something had happened—something that looked mighty tragic to me. I was gone, gone for good and forever, in love with that girl—and she with her millions. It seemed there was nothing to do but pull out and leave her, with one of those James K. Hackett smiles that cover an aching heart. I was trying to figure out how to send myself a telegram calling me away, when she invited me to go in for a swim that afternoon. So I decided to stick around for another half-day of bliss—and I'm glad I did. For something came along that afternoon and started me on my way to paradise—but wait a minute.

WE had a gloomy lunch. The food was O. K., but conversation languished. There seemed to be some sort of feud or vendetta on between Maude and her Clarence. It wasn't surprising; Maude has a disposition that would put a crimp in heaven in less than an hour's time.

After lunch we read and lounged, some of us having lounge-suits and others contenting themselves by merely dropping down onto lounges. Along about three Marian and I had a very neat little hour in the water, and after one glance at her in her bathing-suit I

knew that that telegram calling me home had to arrive any minute without delay.

I'm getting close to the big scene now; so sit tight. When at last we tired of the wet lake we went ashore, stole up on *Quiet Days* from the rear, and started around to the veranda at the front. As we rounded a corner we were met by angry words, and we both stopped dead. There, so mad neither of them saw us, stood Maude and Clarence, on the home-stretch of a lovers' quarrel.

"Mrs. Laceby told me she saw you,—you and this creature,—and there's nothing more to be said," Maude raged. "Our engagement is broken. Here,"—she removed the sparkler and held it out,—here is your ring."

"I don't want it," said Clarence, just as proud and haughty as Maude.

"Very well," replied Maude hotly, "I'm sure I don't."

And she turned and threw that three-thousand-dollar diamond-and-platinum ring plumb into the lake.

Marian and I made a hasty get-away. As we turned, I caught sight of Mrs. Laceby peering out through some very filmy curtains. Just then Wadleigh, the butler, stepped gracefully out of our path. I believe he had been looking over our shoulders.

The true depth and meaning of the situation didn't dawn on me for quite a while. You know how it is sometimes—your mind sort of ambles around—mine was ambling around with Marian Paine. I went back to my room to change. That valet was there—the man was omnipotent. He got in my way with things I didn't want, and hid everything I did. I kept wishing Marian didn't have all that money, and from that I shifted to my own financial condition. There seemed little hope there. You know we're told it is the first thousand that is hardest to get. I pictured myself with that thousand—going on and on—hauling in millions—marrying.

But it wasn't any use. I didn't have a thousand cents. And then—all of a sudden—the thing popped into my mind—diamond and platinum—three thousand, if it cost a cent—lying alone and, I supposed, quite forgotten, at the bottom of Lake Asquewan.

Aha, says I to myself. Aha, indeed! And I added to the valet, thoughtful-like:

"See if you can get that bathing-suit dry before night. I may want to use it."

"Very good, sir," he answered.

I WENT down to dinner. Marian Paine was standing by the rail, all glowing and beautiful in an expensive evening dress. I stopped to talk with her, but she was rather non-committal. Her fine eyes stared out at the lake.

It was at the table that the true inwardness of the situation came home to me. I suppose you've read those pirate-stories—you know, crowd of villains wrecked on an island alone, knowing the burial-place of the late captain's treasure. How the idea grows and grows on them—how each man begins to picture all the others dead and himself all alone with the loot—then the knife-thrust, the sharp cry, the silence—and one less villain left to claim a share in the golden horde. Well, it was more or less like that. Mrs. Laceby had been telling the story of the quarrel—talking was the best thing she did. There were no knives in sight except the table silver,—too dull by far,—and of course all that sort of thing has gone out, but—if looks could kill!

"I—er—I understand that the moonlight bathing is very—er—charming," said Laceby—and him looking like the First National—but you never can tell.

"It's most exhilarating," says Mrs. Sin Jin, one of the few innocents present.

"Thinking of trying it to-night?" I asked brightly.

Laceby gave me a look, desert-island style.

"No—positively no," he replied.

Davis spoke up.

"Moonlight bathing," he remarks soft and dreamy. "Sounds romantic. Think I'll have a go at it."

"To-night?" I wanted to know.

"Soon—soon," he answered, non-committal, and also with the look. Davis hadn't been ten feet from the sideboard since his arrival. Something was certainly on.

Maude and Clarence were very, very polite to one another. And Clarence

kept intimating that something was going to call him back to the city unexpectedly.

There wasn't much of any dancing that night. Everybody sort of felt a longing to sit by the rail, measuring distances with their eye. The phonograph ran along unnoticed. Along about eight o'clock the Lacebys said they were strangely weary, and bade everybody good night. Pretty soon Davis said farewell to the highballs, and also slipped away. Clarence was the next to fade—then our hosts. When Marian spoke of a headache and disappeared, I took a close survey of the water and followed.

That valet wasn't so bad, after all. He'd got the bathing-suit dry. It took me about two seconds to get into it, and I hurried back on deck. There were Laceby and Davis, both in bathing-suits, standing and staring blankly at each other.

"Ah, gentlemen," said I, "you have changed your minds. Quite right, too. What a night for a swim!"

They gave me a couple of those looks. But it was a fine night, just the same. The moon was on the job with a complete repertory of daylight effects. The waters of the lake were still and tranquil and transparent. You could see every pebble on the bottom. I made sure of that, leaning over the rail. Then, since there was nothing else to do, we all dived in.

Well, thank heaven, I'm plumper than most, and cold water doesn't bother me. It was lucky for me that night. The contest that began right there tested every bit of staying power I had.

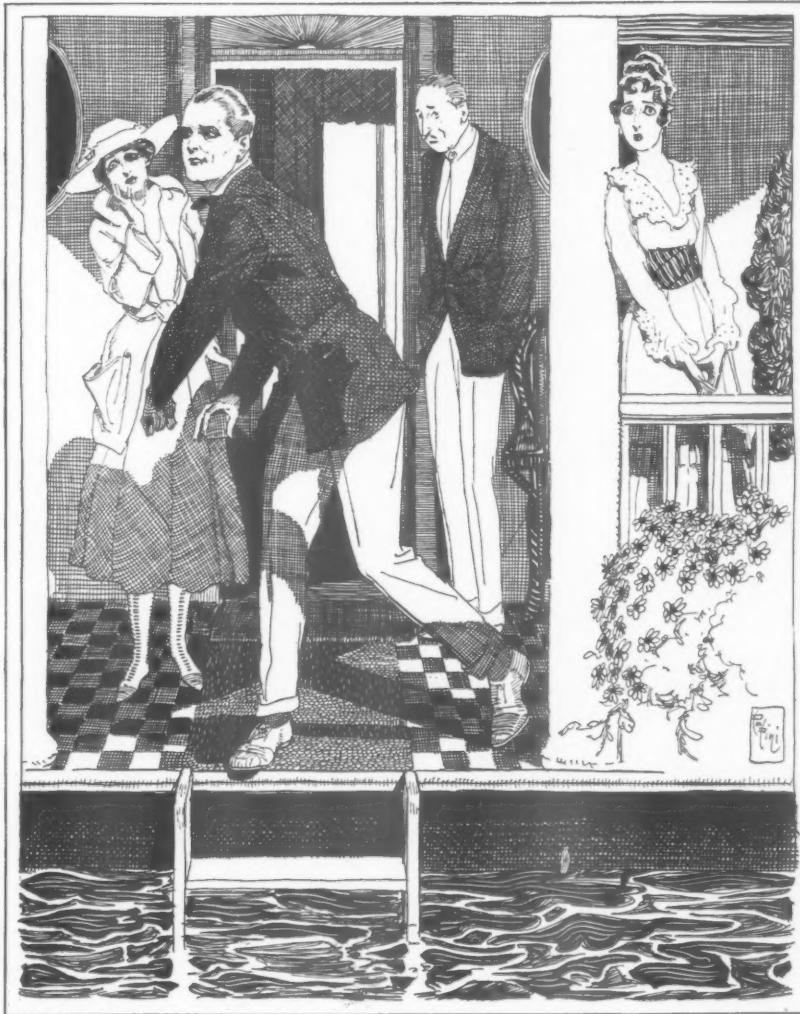
"Damned silly," said little Laceby, after an hour of it, "to stay in all night."

His teeth were chattering. Davis was rapidly turning a deep purple. I sensed that victory was on the way.

"Nonsense," I remarked blithely; "we've only just come in."

They fooled round for another ten minutes, and then both gave up. They climbed on deck and stood there, shivering like two currant jellies, and gazing gloomily down at me.

"Better not stand round in wet clothes," I called to them. "You'll catch your death."



"Oh-h-h!" gasped Maude. "Um—er—gurgle!" put in Clarence. I paid no attention to them. I threw. There was a flash, such as platinum makes when it moves rapidly through the sunlight.

They muttered something profane and ran away. I knew I had to work fast.

It took me about two minutes to locate that three-thousand-dollar token lying at the bottom of the lake,—some ten feet down,—and I began diving. Ever try it? I mean, locating something with your eye, taking a long breath, plunging down and making a grab at the floor of a lake. It's no easy job. I brought up enough sand to start a rival Sahara, and

other things I won't mention. Ten times at least I went down, and ten times I apprehended nothing of note.

JUST as I was coming up the tenth time with a fine handful of real estate, I heard a splash, and there was Marian Paine swimming toward me.

"Hello," I said, startled. "Couldn't resist the moon either, eh? This will cure your headache."

She didn't say anything, but swam over and took hold of the lower rail of the boat. Then she sort of hung there, looking at me.

"Bully night for a swim," I went on, silly, rattled. I was treading water to keep up.

"Is that what you're doing—swimming?" she asked.

I was just about to reply "Of course," when it came to me all of a sudden—why lie about it? So I went over and grabbed hold beside her, and spoke.

"I wont try to bluff," I said. "I'm not out for a swim. I'm out for a diamond-and-platinum ring worth three thousand dollars, if it's worth a cent."

"You—" she sort of gasped. "Why—I thought—Mrs. Quimby told me—" And she stopped.

"Yes—me," I answered. "It's true—I'm broke absolutely, and three thousand dollars—I've never had that much in my life."

"Why—I can't believe—" She stared up at me. "Mrs. Quimby told me you were worth millions."

An idea struck me all of a sudden, bright, dazzling, beautiful.

"Would you mind telling me—honest—just what you are doing here?" I inquired.

She hung her head.

"I might as well," she began. "You see—I—er—I've never had as much as three thousand dollars either, and—"

I was so delighted I kissed her. And as she didn't seem to mind—much—I kissed her again. I wont go into the words and music of that scene; it would be more or less indelicate of me to blab it about; but I told her, hanging there in the water under that wholly sympathetic moon, how I loved her, and always had, and always would, and was on the point of leaving her forever because Mrs. Quimby had told me of her millions. Then we both remembered that Mrs. Quimby boasted of being a born matchmaker, and it came to us that this was Mrs. Quimby's cheap, mercenary way of interesting people in each other. Some mind, Mrs. Quimby's—some soul! But it didn't matter. For Marian admitted she cared for me, and I began to see that that night was the most mag-

nificent night in all the collection since Eden.

"I tremble," I said presently, "when I think how near we came to losing each other. *A bas* the Quimbys. Curse all the rich. Which reminds me—now we're going to get that ring—"

"I don't feel right about it, somehow," said Marian.

"Nonsense!" I answered. "It has been thrown away because nobody wants it. Maude doesn't; Clarence doesn't. It belongs to the daring soul who can find it. Watch me. I'm sure no man ever dived into a lake for a ring before with more to inspire him to success—"

I dived, and I got it. Don't tell me the day of miracles is no more. It wasn't really a miracle, though, for she was there to cheer me on. After I'd come up with that valuable bit of jewelry firm amid a lot of pebbles, we hung to the side of the boat, and I got a kiss for my trouble. It was a very pretty scene—or would have been, if suddenly a big black something hadn't swept over our heads and splashed most of Lake Asquewan in our eyes.

We turned, and there was Clarence, puffing and blowing like a big Newfoundland after a stick.

"Oh—ah—er—hello," said Clarence. "Great night for a swim." And he swam.

We climbed aboard and stood watching. Clarence seemed to swim mostly in one spot, and he kept an eager eye on us.

"Now you see," said Marian, "we can't possibly keep it. Clarence wants it back. They say he's about to chuck Maude for a girl in the Follies, and he probably figures he can use that ring on Broadway."

"All right," I said; "he can have it for all of me. I've got you."

"Then you'll give it to him?" said Marian.

"I can't quite figure out," I answered, "whether I should hand it over to Clarence or to Maude. I'll tell you—we'll let the matter go over until morning. Perhaps an idea will come to me in the night. In the meantime, it wont hurt Clarence to swim. Serves him right for getting engaged to Maude, anyhow."

And we said good night, happy as any two people can be.

THE great joy of being engaged to Marian woke me early next morning. I dressed and started for the veranda. Just as I was about to push open the screen door, I heard the familiar splash of a bather out front. I went over and peered down at the lake.

If you'll believe me, there was Wadleigh the butler, the man who invented dignity, swimming round like mad, anxiously studying the water. I had a moment of regret. Probably the poor fellow had some scheme afoot for his old age—a return to Wessex, or Sussex, or Moreton-on-Marsh or some such place, to spend his declining years as keeper of the tavern, there amid the scenes of his boyhood. I smiled at him—I was afraid of him no longer.

"Can't you find it, Wadleigh?" I asked.

He paused, startled and shivering.

"Find what, sir?" he wanted to know.

"The ring," said I.

He swam over and hung onto the boat. "If I might make so bold, sir," he remarked, "may I ask you to explain your meaning—"

"Don't try to stall," I said. "And take a tip from me, before pneumonia sets in. The ring isn't out there now."

I turned my back.

"Very good, sir," I heard Wadleigh murmur respectfully. And he bowed himself off the side of the boat and rapidly up the shore to his bathhouse.

Marian came out soon after. If you've been on many house-parties you've noticed most girls look like the devil early in the morning—all puffy-eyed and ragged; but Marian didn't. She looked gorgeous. I tell you, she's a wonder. But no matter. I told her about Wadleigh.

"Sammy," she said, "I've thought it all out—we can't keep that ring. It would not be right. We must give it back to—to—"

"To whom?" said I, like the owl.

"Well—I—er—that's just what I can't figure out," she stammered. "Perhaps you'd better throw it back in the lake."

"And have all these people catch

pneumonia," I said, shocked. "My dear, I'm surprised at you. Still, it's not such a bad plan, at that. Now listen—I've an idea. As soon as Clarence appears I'll nab him and talk to him about the Piping Rock races, or some other intellectual topic. When you see us together, run off and steer Maude onto us, accidental-like."

"What are you going to do?" she wanted to know.

"Trust your coming husband," said I. Did she? You bet.

PRETTY soon Clarence arrived, looking even more tired and vacant than usual. He made frantic efforts to avoid conversation, but I grabbed him and hung on. All at once Maude and Marian came upon us. The good mornings were frigid, and I had to speak quickly, for Maude was moving along.

"By the way," I began genially, "a very lucky thing has happened." I took the ring from my pocket, and stood holding it out. Clarence's eyes popped, and Maude herself was more or less rooted to the spot. "I was in bathing last night, and found this ring. I had no idea who had lost it, until Marian here identified it—"

Nobody spoke.

"Some little *Sherlock*, I am," I continued. I moved nearer Maude, holding out the ring. She gave Clarence a black look.

"I'm sorry," she said. "The ring wasn't lost. As a matter of fact, I threw it away. I had no further use for it."

I tried to seem overcome with surprise.

"Then—you don't want it," I gasped.

"Certainly not," Maude answered, turning on the proud and haughty to the limit.

"And Clarence, you—" I held it out to him.

The boy had spirit. He was just as lofty as Maude.

"I'm sure I don't want it," he said with feeling.

"Then it appears that in finding it I've made more or less of a social error," I remarked.

"I'm afraid so, old chap," responded Clarence in the zero voice.

"In that case," said I, "there's just

one thing to be done. I'll rectify my error at once."

I stepped back. I raised my arm.

"Oh-h-h!" gasped Maude.

"Um—er—gurgle!" put in Clarence.

I paid no attention to them. I threw. There was a flash, such as platinum makes when it moves rapidly through the sunlight. Then a sort of *zip* in the water, and a series of circles starting with the *zip* for a center and breaking on the side of the boat. I was pleased to note that I had thrown wide and far.

"There," said I. "That settles it."

Maude and Clarence stood glaring at one another. I turned to Marian, who was a bit startled but smiling happily, and we left that heavily charged atmosphere.

Well, little remains to be told. I had thrown too far for Clarence, I fancy, for he left on the noon train. Marian and I came away just as soon as we decently could—which happened to be the next day. We had a long, wonderful ride together back to the city. And on the way we fixed it up—about next Thursday, you know. Don't forget you're to be a feature of the affair. I'll give you more details later. You see, there on the train, we made up our minds that the sum of two thousand, nine hundred ninety-nine dollars and seventy-five cents is ample to get married on—

"WAIT a minute," said I, breaking into Sammy's story. "What do you mean? Two thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars—"

"And seventy-five cents," replied Sammy. "Exactly! The three thousand minus twenty-five cents, the fourth part of a dollar—a brand new, shiny quarter—"

"What quarter?"

"The quarter I threw into Lake Asquewan that morning we stood there with Clarence and Maude. It made the same sort of flash platinum would have made as it flew through the sunlight—and the same sort of circles in the water—"

"Sammy—Sammy—" I gasped.

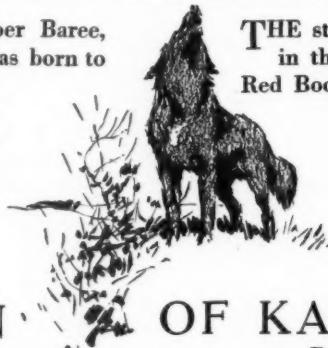
"That's why I say I've got two thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars and seventy-five cents," laughed Sammy. "I have. There were a lot of mysterious doings on the lake that last night we were up there—the splash of people swimming, the sound of oars, the flicker of lanterns. Davis and Laceby put on their bathing-suits immediately after dinner, and Wadleigh wasn't much in evidence as the evening wore on."

He stood up.

"I hope none of them catch cold," he said. "It's hardly worth it. Poor fishing. Very poor fishing—now."

My door slammed behind him.

DO you remember Baree,
the pup that was born to
Kazan and Grey
Wolf, in those
wonderful stories
about Kazan, the
Wolf-Dog?



THE story of Baree begins
in the next issue of The
Red Book Magazine. It is a
story of adventures
in the wild, such as
only Mr. Curwood
can write.

"A SON OF KAZAN"
with illustrations by
Frank B. Hoffman By
James Oliver Curwood

Begins in the next—the March—issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE
On sale February 23rd.

JOHN STUART WEBSTER, mining engineer and a real he-man, whose serious attention could only be challenged by an extraordinary woman, flagged the train in Death Valley, California, on which Dolores Ruey was a passenger. Webster had just accumulated one hundred thousand dollars in a mine, but he looked like a tramp. Dolores was, as Webster put it, beautiful as a royal flush. They met in a way that neither could forget.

When Webster first saw her, a big, pink-jowled man was annoying Dolores. Webster offered his services. Two minutes later the fellow was reduced to a battered hulk. "You are a very courtly gentleman," said the girl gravely to Webster, and passed on to the dining-car. Webster got her name and destination, New Orleans, from the conductor.

In Denver, Edward P. Jerome, wealthy mine owner, offered Webster charge of a great mining property. Webster refused. Instead he wired his former protégé, Billy Geary, in Sobrante, Central America, that he would finance the mine Geary had found, and would go at once to Sobrante. Jerome went to the train with Webster, and there they saw Dolores Ruey. "That's the future Mrs. W., if I have my way," Webster told Jerome.

Immediately Jerome had a plan. He would get Webster and the girl married. That would end Webster's staying in Sobrante. So he left Webster, introduced himself to Dolores, told her Webster, the man who had fought for her, was on her train, and that he would pay her five thousand dollars if she could induce Webster to return to Denver in ninety days, whether she married him or not. The girl was amused. "Make it ten thousand," she countered. "Taken!" answered Jerome. And Dolores chuckled over her strange commission. For she was going to Sobrante, too. It was the home of her childhood. Her father had been Don Ricardo Ruey, president of the country till he was killed by revolutionists, when Dolores was seven. The child had been rescued by "Mother" Jenks, keeper of an inn. The woman had sent Dolores to New Orleans and then to Los Angeles to school, never letting the girl know who she really was. Now Dolores

was going, unannounced, to visit her benefactor.

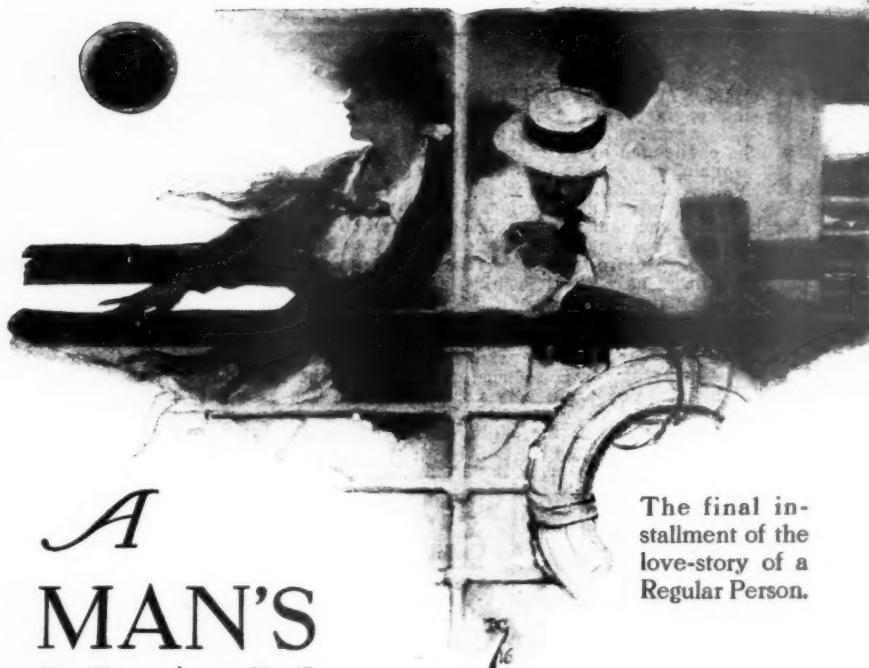
WEBSTER was delayed on his way by ptomaine poisoning, while, in Sobrante, Billy Geary was falling in love with Dolores. Webster was stunned when he arrived and found how matters stood with his young friend. In his big-hearted way he decided to put Geary in the way of wealth, then leave for the States. But two circumstances interfered, a mix-up with the Sobrantean government, and the disturbing presence of Dolores.

On the way down, Webster had befriended a stranger, who proved to be Dolores' lost brother, come to overthrow the usurper's government. The brother attracted Webster very much, and they became friends; Webster therefore helped finance the revolution. He also found out that Dolores was Ruey's sister and told the brother that the night after the struggle he would dine with Ruey in the palace and bring a guest.

Webster found Geary's mine rich. Thereupon he told the younger man, whose health the climate had hurt, to marry Dolores at once and take her to the States for a trip. Geary was overjoyed. When Webster went down from the mine, however, he found Dolores still at the hotel. He questioned her, but got nothing definite. "No, Caliph," she said wistfully, "somehow the Master of Things ordained that on the subject of love, man must do all the talking." She said she had stayed behind to see her brother enter the palace of his father. So there seemed only one thing to do, protect her during the struggle.

The revolution lasted only a day. Webster took Dolores to a steamer in the bay till the firing slowed down. Then they entered the city. Near the palace Webster was in time to help stop the flight of Sarros, the dictator, but was himself almost killed. Dolores found him, dropped beside him and sobbed out the love she had concealed so well. Soldiers came and carried Webster within the palace gates, where Dolores saw a handsome young man meet the prostrate form with a sorrow almost as great as her own.

The Previous Chapters of "A MAN'S MAN"



A MAN'S MAN

CHAPTER XXII

WHILE Ricardo watched beside the unconscious Webster, one of his aides galloped up the street, to return presently with a detachment with stretchers, into which Webster and Don Juan Cafetero were laid and carried up the palace driveway into the huge golden reception-hall where only the night before, Sarros had greeted the belles and beaux of his capital. In the meantime Mother Jenks had succeeded in restoring Dolores to consciousness; supported by the indomitable old woman, the girl slowly followed the grim procession until, at the door of the reception-room, they found their further progress barred by a sentry.

"The red-haired man is dead," he informed them in response to their eager queries. "If you want his body," he con-

tinued, hazarding a guess as to their mission, "I guess you can have it. There he is." And the sentry pointed to the stretcher which had been set down along the wall of the reception-hall.

"'Ow about the other?" Mother Jenks demanded. Don Juan Cafetero had, unfortunately, been so much of a nuisance to her in life that she was not minded to be troubled greatly over him in death, although the Spartanlike manner of his exit had thrilled the British bulldog blood in her.

"The big fellow isn't quite dead yet, but I'm afraid he's a goner. The surgeons have him in this room now. Friend of yours, Miss?" he inquired in tones freighted with neighborly sympathy.

Dolores nodded.

"Sorry I can't let you in, Miss," he continued, "but the General ordered me to keep everybody out until the doctors have finished looking him over. If I was



By Peter B. Kyne

Who wrote the famous "Cappy Ricks" stories.

ILLUSTRATED BY DEAN CORNWELL

you, I'd wait in that room across the hall; then you can get the first news when the doctors come out."

Mother Jenks accepted his advice and steered her charge into the room indicated. And as they waited, Ricardo Ruey stood anxiously beside the table on which John Stuart Webster's big, limp body reposed, while Doctor Pacheco, assisted by a Sobrantean *confrère*, went deftly over him with surgical scissors and cut the blood-soaked clothing from his body.

"He breathes very gently," the rebel leader said presently. "Is there any hope?"

The little doctor shrugged. "I fear not. That bayonet-thrust in the left side missed his heart but not his lung."

"But apparently he hasn't bled much from that wound."

"The hemorrhage is probably internal. Even if that congestion of blood in the lungs does not prove fatal very shortly, he cannot, in his weakened state, survive the traumatic fever from all these wounds. It is bound—hello, how our poor friend still lives with the bayonet broken off in his body—for here is steel —hah! Not a bayonet, but a pistol."

He unbuttoned the wounded man's coat and found a strap running diagonally up across his breast and over the right shoulder, connecting with a holster under the left arm. The Doctor un-

buckled this strap and removed the holster, which contained Webster's spare gun; Ricardo, glancing disinterestedly at the sheathed weapon, noted a small, new, triangular hole in the leather holster. He picked it up, withdrew the pistol and found a deep scratch, recently made, along the blued steel close to the vulcanite butt.

When Ricardo glanced at Pacheco after his scrutiny of the pistol and holster, the Doctor's dark eyes were regarding him mirthfully.

"I have been unnecessarily alarmed, my general," said Pacheco. "Our dear friend has been most fortunate in his choice of wounds—"

"He's a lucky Yankee; that's what he is, my dear Pacheco. A lucky Yankee!" Ricardo leaned over and examined the bayonet-wound in Webster's left side. "He took the point of the steel on this pistol he happened to be wearing under his left arm," he went on to explain. "That turned the bayonet and it slid along his ribs, making a superficial flesh-wound."

Pacheco nodded. "And this bullet merely burned the top of his right shoulder, while another passed through his biceps without touching the bone. His most severe wound is this jab in the hip."

They stripped every stitch of clothing from Webster and went over him carefully. At the back of his head they found

a little clotted blood from a small split in the scalp; also they found a lump, of generous proportions. Pacheco laughed briefly but contentedly.

"Then he is not even seriously injured?" Ricardo interrupted that laugh.

"I would die of fright if I had to fight this fine fellow a month from to-day," the little doctor chirped. "Look at that chest, *mi general*—and that flat abdomen. The man is in superb physical condition; it is the bump on the head that renders him unconscious—not loss of blood."

As if to confirm this expert testimony, Webster at that moment breathed long and deeply, screwed up his face and shook his head, very slightly. Thereafter for several minutes he gave no further evidence of an active interest in life—seeing which Pacheco decided to take prompt advantage of his unconsciousness and probe the wounds in his arm and shoulder for the fragments of clothing which the bullets must have carried into them. After ten minutes of probing, Pacheco announced that he was through and ready to bandage; whereupon John Stuart Webster said faintly but very distinctly, in English:

"I'm awfully glad you are, Doc'. It hurt like hell! Did you manage to get a bite on that fishing-trip?"

"Jack Webster, you scoundrel!" Ricardo yelled joyously, and he shook the patient with entire disregard of the latter's wounds. "Oh, man, I'm glad you're not dead."

"Your sentiments appeal to me strongly, my friend. I'm—too—tired to look—at you. Who the devil—are you?"

"I'm Ricardo."

Fell a silence, while Webster prepared for another speech. "Where am I?"

"In the palace."

"Hum-m! Then it was a famous victory."

"One strong, decisive blow did the trick, old chap. We won pulled-up, and that forty-thousand-dollar bet of yours is safe. I'll cash the ticket for you tomorrow morning."

"Damn the forty thousand. Where's my croppy boy?"

"Your what?"

"My wild Irish blackthorn, Don Juan Cafetero."

"I hope, old man, he has ere now that which all brave Irishmen and true deserve—a harp with a crown. In life the Irish have the harp without the crown, you know."

"How did he die?" Webster whispered.

"He died hard, with the holes in front—and he died for you."

Two big tears trickled slowly through Webster's closed lids and rolled across his pale cheek. "Poor, lost, lonesome, misunderstood wreck," he murmured presently, "he was an extremist in all things. He used to sing those wonderfully poetic ballads of his people—I remember one that began: 'Green were the fields where my forefathers dwelt.' I think his heart was in Kerry—so we'll send him there. He's my dead, Ricardo; care for his body, because I'm—I'm going to plant Don Juan with the—shamrocks. They didn't understand him here. He was an exile—so I'm going to send him—home."

"He shall have a military funeral," Ricardo promised.

"From the cathedral," Webster added. "And take a picture of it for his people. He told me about them. I want them to think he amounted to something, after all. And when you get this two-by-four republic of yours going again, Rick, you might have your congress award Don Juan a thousand dollars *oro* for capturing Sarros. Then we can send the money to his old folks."

"But he didn't capture Sarros," Ricardo protested. "The man escaped when the Guards cut their way through."

"He didn't. That was a ruse while he beat it out the gate where you found me. I saw Don Juan knock him cold with the butt of his rifle, after I'd brought down his horse."

"Do you think he's there yet?"

"He may be—provided all this didn't happen the day before yesterday. If I wanted him, I'd go down and look for him, Rick."

"I'll go right away, Jack."

"One minute, then. Send a man around to that little back-street where they have the wounded—it's a couple of blocks away from here—to tell Mother



Jenks and the young lady with her I'll not be back."

"They're both outside now. They must have gone looking for you, because they found you and Don Juan first and then told me about it."

"Who told you?"

"Mother Jenks."

"Oh! Well, run along and get your man."

RICARDO departed on the run, taking the sentry at the door with him and in his haste giving no thought to Mother Jenks and her companion waiting for the Doctor's verdict. In the palace grounds he gathered two more men and bade them follow him; leading by twenty yards, he emerged at the gate and paused to look around him.

Some hundred feet down the street from the palace-gate Sarros' black charger lay dead. When Webster's bullet brought the poor beast down, his rider had fallen clear of him, only to fall a victim to the ferocity of Don Juan Cafetero. Later, as Sarros lay stunned and bleeding beside his mount, the stricken animal in its death-struggle had half risen, only to fall again, this time on the extended left leg of his late master; consequently when Sarros recovered consciousness following the thoughtful attentions of his assailant, it was to discover himself a hopeless prisoner. The heavy carcass of his horse pinned his foot and part of his leg to the ground, rendering him as helpless and desperate as a trapped animal. For several minutes now he had been striving frantically to release himself; with his sound right leg pressed against the animal's backbone, he tried to gain sufficient purchase to withdraw his left leg from the carcass.

As Ricardo caught sight of Sarros, he instinctively realized that this was his mortal enemy; motioning his men to stand back, he approached the struggling man on tiptoe and thoughtfully possessed himself of the Dictator's pistol, which lay in back of him but not out of reach. Just as he did so, Sarros, apparently convinced of the futility of his efforts to free himself, surrendered to fate and commenced rather pitifully to weep with rage and despair. Ricardo watched him for a few

Throughout the night the priest remained with him, and when that early morning march to the cemetery commenced, he walked beside Sarros, repeating the prayers for the dying.

seconds, for there was just sufficient of the blood of his Castilian ancestors still in his veins to render this sorry spectacle rather an enjoyable one to him. Besides, he was fifty per cent Iberian, a race which can hate quite as thoroughly as it can love, and for a time Ricardo even nourished the thought of still further indulging his thirst for revenge by pretending to aid Sarros in his escape! Presently, however, he put the ungenerous thought from him; seizing the dead horse by the tail, he dragged the carcass off his enemy's leg, and while Sarros sat up, tailor-fashion, and commenced to rub the circulation back into the bruised member, Ricardo seated himself on the rump of the dead horse and appraised his prisoner critically.

SARROS glanced up, remembered his manners and very heartily and gracefully thanked his deliverer.

"It is not a matter for which thanks are due me, Sarros," Ricardo replied coldly. "I am Ricardo Luiz Ruey, and I have come back to Sobrante to pay my father's debt to you. You will remember having forced the obligation upon me in the cemetery some fifteen years ago."

For perhaps ten horrified seconds Sarros stared at Ricardo; then the dark blood in him came to his defense; his tense pose relaxed; the fright and despair left his swarthy countenance as if erased with a moist sponge, leaving him as calmly stoical and indifferent as a cigar-store Indian. He fumbled in his coat pocket for a gold cigarette-case, selected a cigarette, lighted it and blew smoke at Ricardo. The jig was up; he knew it; and with admirable nonchalance he declined to lower his presidential dignity by discussing or considering it. He realized it would delight his captor to know he dreaded to face the issue, and it was not a Sarros practice to give aid and comfort to the enemy.

"Spunky devil!" Ricardo reflected, forced to admiration despite himself. Aloud he said: "You know the code of our people, Sarros. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

Sarros bowed. "I am at your service," he replied carelessly.

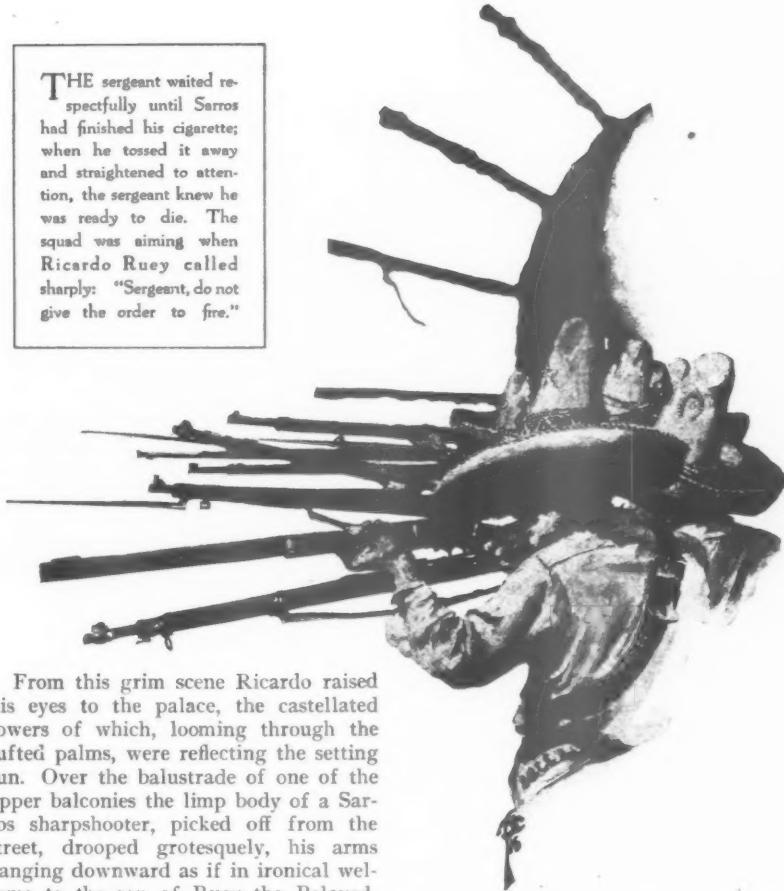
"Then at daylight to-morrow morning

I shall make settlement." Ricardo beckoned his men to approach. "Take this man and confine him under a double guard in the arsenal," he ordered. "Present my compliments to the officer in charge there and tell him it is my wish that a priest be provided for the prisoner to-night, and that to-morrow morning, at six o'clock, a detail of six men and a sergeant escort this man to the cemetery in the rear of the Catedral de la Crux. I will meet the detail there and take command of it."

Two of Ricardo's imported fighting-men stepped to the prisoner's side, seized him, one by each arm, and lifted him to his feet; supported between them, he limped away to his doom, while his youthful conqueror remained seated on the dead horse, his gaze bent upon the ground, his mind dwelling, not upon his triumph over Sarros but upon the prodigious proportions of the task before him: the rehabilitation of a nation. After a while he rose and strolled over toward the gate, where he paused to note the grim evidences of the final stand of Webster and Don Juan Cafetero, before passing through the portal.

RICARDO had now, for the first time, an opportunity to look around him; so he halted to realize his homecoming, to thrill with this, the first real view of the home of his boyhood. The spacious lawn surrounding the palace had been plowed and scarred with bursting shrapnel from the field-guns captured in the arsenal, although the building itself had been little damaged, not having sustained a direct hit because of Ricardo's stringent orders not to use artillery on the palace unless absolutely necessary to smoke Sarros out. Scattered over the grounds Ricardo counted some twenty-odd Government soldiers, all wearing that pathetically flat, crumpled appearance which seems inseparable from the bodies of men killed in action. The first shrapnel had probably commenced to drop in the grounds just as a portion of the palace garrison had been marching out to join the troops fighting at the cantonment barracks. Evidently the men had scattered like quail, only to be killed as they ran.

THE sergeant waited respectfully until Sarros had finished his cigarette; when he tossed it away and straightened to attention, the sergeant knew he was ready to die. The squad was aiming when Ricardo Ruey called sharply: "Sergeant, do not give the order to fire."



From this grim scene Ricardo raised his eyes to the palace, the castellated towers of which, looming through the tufted palms, were reflecting the setting sun. Over the balustrade of one of the upper balconies the limp body of a Sarros sharpshooter, picked off from the street, drooped grotesquely, his arms hanging downward as if in ironical welcome to the son of Ruey the Beloved. The sight induced in Ricardo a sense of profound sadness; his Irish imagination awoke; to him that mute figure seemed to call upon him for pity, for kindness, for forbearance, for understanding and sympathy. Those outflung arms of the martyred peon symbolized to Ricardo Ruey the spirit of liberty, shackled and helpless, calling upon him for deliverance; they brought to his alert mind a clearer realization of the duty that was his than he had ever had before. He had a great task to perform, a task inaugurated by his father, and which Ricardo could not hope to finish in his lifetime. He must solve the agrarian problem; he must develop the rich natural resources of his country; he must provide free, compulsory education and evolve

from the ignorance of the peon an intelligence that would build up that which Sobrante, in common with her sister republics, so woefully lacked—the great middle class that stands always as a buffer between the aggression and selfishness of the upper class and the helplessness and childishness of the lower.

Ricardo bowed his head. "Help me, O Lord," he prayed. "Thou hast given me in Thy wisdom, a man's task. Help me that I may not prove unworthy."

CHAPTER XXIII

MOTHER JENKS, grown impatient at the lack of news concerning Webster, left Dolores to her grief in the room across the hall and sought the open

air, for of late she had been experiencing with recurring frequency a slight feeling of suffocation. She sat down on the broad granite steps, helped herself to a much needed "bracer" from her brandy-flask and was gazing pensively at the scene around her when Ricardo came up the stairs.

"'Ello!" Mother Jenks saluted him. "W're 'ave you been, Mr. Bowers?"

"I have just returned from capturing Sarros, Mrs. Jenks. He is on his way to the arsenal under guard."

"Gor' strike me pink!" the old lady cried. "'Ave I lived to see this day!" Her face was wreathed in a happy smile. "I wonder 'ow the beggar feels to 'ave the shoe on the other foot, eh—the 'eartless 'ound! I'm 'opin' this General Ruey will 'ave the blighter shot."

"You need have no worry on that score, Mrs. Jenks. I'm General Ruey. Andrew Bowers was just my summer name, as it were."

"Angels guard me! Wot the bloomin' 'ell surprise wont we 'ave next. Wot branch o' the Ruey tribe do you belong to? Are you a nephew o' him that was president before Sarros shot 'im? Antonio Ruey, who was 'arf brother to the president, 'ad a son 'e called Ricardo. Are you 'im, might I arsk?"

"I am the son of Ricardo the Beloved," he answered proudly.

"Not the lad as was away at school when 'is father was hexecuted?"

"I am that same lad, Mrs. Jenks. And who are you? You seem to know a deal of my family history."

"I," the old publican replied with equal pride, "am Mrs. Colonel 'Enery Jenks, who was your father's chief of hartiallery an' 'ad the hextreme honor o' dyin' in front o' the same wall with 'im. By the w'y, 'ow's Mr. Webster?" she added, suddenly remembering the subject closest to her heart just then.

"His wounds are triffling. He'll live, Mrs. Jenks."

"Well, that's better than gettin' poked in the eye with a sharp stick," the old dame decided philosophically.

"Do you remember my little sister, Mrs. Jenks?" Ricardo continued. "She was in the palace when Sarros attacked it; she perished there."

"I believe I 'ave got a slight recollection o' the nipper, sir," Mother Jenks answered cautiously. To herself she said: "I s'y, 'Enrietta, 'ere's a pretty go. 'E don't know the lamb is livin' an' in the next room! My word, wot a riot w'en 'e meets 'er!"

"I will see you again, Mrs. Jenks. I must have a long talk with you," Ricardo told her, and passed on into the palace; whereupon Mother Jenks once more fervently implored the Almighty to strike her pink, and the iron restraint of a long, hard, exciting day being relaxed at last, the good soul bowed her gray head in her arms and wept, moving her body from side to side the while and demanding, of no one in particular, a single legitimate reason why she, a blooming old baggage and not fit to live, should be the recipient of such manifold blessings as this day had brought forth.

IN the meantime Ricardo, with his hand on the knob of the door leading to the room where Webster was having his wounds dressed, paused suddenly, his attention caught by the sound of a sob, long-drawn and inexpressibly pathetic. He listened and made up his mind that a woman in the room across the entrance-hall was bewailing the death of a loved one who answered to the name of Caliph and John-darling. Further eavesdropping convinced him that Caliph, John-darling and Mr. John Stuart Webster were one and the same person, and so he tilted his head on one side like a cock-robin and considered.

"By jingo, that's most interesting," he decided. "The wounded hero has a sweetheart or a wife—and an American, too. She must be a recent acquisition, because all the time we were together on the steamer coming down here he never spoke of either, despite the fact that we got friendly enough for such confidences. Something funny about this. I'd better sound the old boy before I start passing out words of comfort to that unhappy female."

He passed on into the room. John Stuart Webster had, by this time, been washed and bandaged, and one of the Sarros servants (for the ex-dictator's retinue still occupied the palace) had, at

Doctor Pacheco's command, prepared a guest-chamber upstairs and furnished a night gown of ample proportions to cover Mr. Webster's bebandaged but otherwise naked person. A stretcher had just arrived, and the wounded man was about to be carried upstairs. The late financial backer of the revolution was looking very pale and dispirited; for once in his life his whimsical, bantering nature was subdued. His eyes were closed, and he did not open them when Ricardo entered.

"Well, I have Sarros," the latter declared.

Webster paid not the slightest attention to this announcement. Ricardo bent over him. "Jack, old boy," he queried, "do you know a person of feminine persuasion who calls you Caliph?"

John Stuart Webster's eyes and mouth flew wide open. "What the devil!" he tried to roar. "You haven't been speaking to her, have you? If you have, I'll never forgive you, because you've spoiled my little surprise party."

"No, I haven't been speaking to her, but she's in the next room crying fit to break her heart because she thinks you've been killed."

"You scoundrel! Aren't you human? Go tell her it's only a couple of punctures, not a blow-out." He sighed. "Isn't it sweet of her to weep over an old hunk like me!" he added softly. "Bless her tender heart!"

"Who is she?" Ricardo was very curious.

"That's none of your business. You wait and I'll tell you. She's the guest I told you I was going to bring to dinner, and that's enough for you to know for the present. *Vaya*, you idiot, and bring her in here, so I can assure her my head is bloody but unbowed. Doctor, throw that rug over my shanks and make me look pretty. I'm going to receive company."

His glance, bent steadily on the door, had in it some of the alert, bright wistfulness frequently to be observed in the eyes of a terrier standing expectantly before a rat-hole. The instant the door opened and Dolores' tear-stained face appeared, he called to her with the old-time camaraderie, for he had erased

from his mind, for the nonce, the memory of the tragedy of poor Don Juan Cafetero and was concerned solely with the task of banishing the tears from those brown eyes and bringing the joy of life back to that sweet face.

"Hello, Seeress," he called weakly. "Little Johnny's been fighting again, and the bad boys gave him an all-fired walloping."

THERE was a swift rustle of skirts, and she was bending over him, her hot little palms clasping eagerly his pale, rough cheeks. "Oh, my dear, my dear!" she whispered, and then her voice choked with the happy tears and she was sobbing on his wounded shoulder. Ricardo stooped to draw her away, but John Stuart bent upon him a look of such frightfulness that he drew back abashed. After all, the past twenty-four hours had been quite exciting, and Ricardo reflected that John's *inamorata* was tired and frightened and probably hadn't eaten anything all day long, so there was ample excuse for her hysteria.

"Come, come, buck up," Webster soothed her, and helped himself to a long whiff of her fragrant hair. "Old man Webster had one leg in the grave, but they've pulled it out again."

Still she sobbed.

"Now, listen to me, lady," he commanded with mock severity. "You just stop that. You're wasting your sympathy; and while, of course, I enjoy your sympathy a heap, just pause to reflect on the result if those salt tears should happen to drop into one of my numerous wounds."

"I'm so sorry for you, Caliph," she murmured brokenly. "You poor, harmless boy! I don't see how anyone could be so fiendish as to hurt you when you were so distinctly a non-combatant."

"Thank you. Let us forget the Hague Conference for the present, however. Have you met your brother?" he whispered.

"No, Caliph."

"Ricardo."

"Yes, Jack."

"Come here. Rick, you scheming, unscrupulous, bloodthirsty adventurer, I have a tremendous surprise in store for



"I love you, John," she whispered, and sealed the sweet confession with a true lover's kiss. "All's well with the
"owing to the fact that I started a trifle late in life, I believe I could stand a little more
Webster growled. "Old Killjoy the Thirteenth,



world," John Stuart Webster announced when he could use his lips once more for conversation. "And," he added, of the same." The door opened, and Ricardo looked in on them. "Killjoy!" King of Sobrante. Is this a surprise to you?"

you. The sweetest girl in the world—and she's right here—"

Ricardo laughingly held up his hand. "Jack, my friend," he interrupted, "you're too weak to make a speech. Don't do it. Besides, you do not have to." He turned and bowed gracefully to Dolores. "I can see for myself she's the sweetest girl in the world, and that she's right here." He held out his hand to her. "Jack thinks he's going to spring a surprise," he continued maliciously, "quite forgetting that a good soldier never permits himself to be taken by surprise. I know all about his little secret, because I heard you mourning for him when you thought he was dead." Ricardo favored her with a knowing wink. "I am delighted to meet the future Mrs. Webster. I quite understand why you fell in love with him, because, you see, I love him myself and so does everybody else."

With typical Castilian courtliness he took her hand, bowed low over it and kissed it. "I am Ricardo Luiz Ruey," he said, anxious to spare his friend the task of further exhausting conversation. "And you are—"

"You're a consummate jackass!" groaned Webster. "I'm only a dear old family friend, and Dolores is going to marry Billy Geary. You impetuous idiot! She's your own sister Dolores Ruey. She, Mark Twain and I have ample cause for common complaint against the world because the reports of our death have been grossly exaggerated. She didn't perish when your father's administration crumbled. Miss Ruey, this is your brother Ricardo. Kiss her, you damn' fool—forgive me, Miss Ruey—oh, Lord, nothing matters any more. He's gummed everything up and ruined my party. I wish I were dead."

Ricardo stared from the outraged Webster to his sister and back again.

"Jack Webster," he declared, "you aren't crazy, are you?"

"Of course he is—the old dear," Dolores cried happily, "but I'm not." She stepped up to her brother, and her arms went around his neck. "Oh, Dick," she cried, "I'm your sister. Truly, I am."

"Dolores. My little lost sister Dolores? Why, I can't believe it."

"Well, you'd better believe it," John Stuart Webster growled feebly. "Of course, you can doubt my word and get away with it, now that I'm flat on my back, but if you dare cast aspersions on that girl's veracity, I'll murder you a month from now."

He closed his eyes, feeling instinctively that he ought not spy on such a sacred family scene. When, however, the affecting meeting was over and Dolores was ruffling the Websterian foretop while her brother pressed the Websterian hand and tried to say all the things he felt but couldn't express, John Stuart Webster brought them both back to a realization of present conditions.

"Don't thank me, sir," he piped in pathetic imitation of the small boy of melodrama. "I have only done me duty, and for that I cannot accept this purse of gold, even though my father and mother are starving."

"Oh, Caliph, do be serious," Dolores pleaded.

He looked up at her fondly. "Take your brother out to Mother Jenks and prove your case, Miss Ruey," he advised her. "And while you're at it, I certainly hope somebody will remember I'm not accustomed to reposing on a center table. Rick, if you can persuade some citizen of this conquered commonwealth to put me to bed, I'd be obliged. I'm dead tired, old horse. I'm—ah—sleepy—"

His head rolled weakly to one side, for he had been playing a part and had nerved himself to finish it gracefully, even in his weakened condition. He sighed, moaned slightly and slipped into unconsciousness.

CHAPTER XXIV

THROUGHOUT the night there was sporadic firing here and there in the city, as the Ruey followers relentlessly hunted down the isolated detachment of Government troops which had escaped annihilation and capture in the final rout and fallen back on the city, where, concealing themselves according to their nature and inclination, they indulged in more or less sniping from windows and the roofs of buildings. The practice of

taking no prisoners was an old one in Sobrante, and few presidents had done more than Sarros to keep that custom alive; ergo, firm in the conviction that to surrender was tantamount to facing a firing squad at daylight, the majority of these stragglers, with consummate courage, fought to the death.

The capture of Buenaventura was alone sufficient to insure a brief revolution, but the capture of Sarros was ample guarantee that the resistance to the new order of things was already at an end. However, Ricardo Ruey felt that the prompt execution of Sarros would be an added guarantee of peace by effectually discouraging any opposition to the rebel cause in the outlying districts, where a few isolated garrisons still remained in ignorance of the momentous events being enacted in the capital. For the time being, Ricardo was master of life and death in Sobrante, and all of his advisers and supporters agreed with him that a so-called trial of the dictator would be a rather useless affair. His life was forfeit a hundred times for murder and treason, and to be ponderous over his elimination would savor of mockery. Accordingly, at midnight, a priest entered the room in the arsenal where Sarros was confined, and shrived him. Throughout the night the priest remained with him, and when that early morning march to the cemetery commenced, he walked beside Sarros, repeating the prayers for the dying.

Upon reaching the cemetery there was a slight wait until a carriage drove up and discharged Ricardo Ruey and Mother Jenks. The sergeant in command of the squad saluted and was briefly ordered to proceed with the matter in hand; whereupon he turned to Sarros, who with the customary *sang froid* of his kind upon such occasions

was calmly smoking, and bowed deprecatingly. Sarros actually smiled upon him. "*Adios, amigos,*" he murmured. Then, as an afterthought and probably because he was sufficient of an egoist to desire to appear a martyr, he added heroically: "I die for my country. May God have mercy on my enemies."

"If you'd cared to play a gentleman's game, you blighter, you might 'ave lived for your bally country," Mother Jenks reminded him in English. "Wonder if the beggar'll wilt or will 'e go through smilin' like my sainted 'Enery on the syme spot."

She need not have worried. It requires a strong man to be dictator of a Roman-candle republic for fifteen years, and whatever his sins of omission or commission, Sarros did not lack animal courage. Alone and unattended he limped away among the graves to the wall on the other side of the cemetery and placed his back against it, negligently, in the attitude of a devil-may-care fellow without a worry in life. The sergeant waited respectfully until Sarros had finished his cigarette; when he tossed it away and straightened to attention, the sergeant knew he was ready to die. At his command there was a sudden rattle of bolts as the cartridges slid from the magazines into the breeches; there followed a momentary halt, another command; the squad was aiming when Ricardo Ruey called sharply:

"Sergeant, do not give the order to fire."

THE rifles were lowered and the men gazed wonderingly at Ricardo. "He's too brave," Ricardo complained. "Damn him, I can't kill him as I would a mad-dog. I've got to give him a chance."

The sergeant raised his brows expressively. Ah, the *ley fuga*, that popular

"A SON OF KAZAN"

By James
Oliver Curwood

The story of the pup
born to Kazan and
Gray Wolf

begins in the next—
the March—issue of

The Red Book Magazine
on sale February 23rd.

THERE'S no use talking—the person who can read this story without feeling a lump in his throat has something wrong with his heart.

The Love-Letters Of a Clodhopper

By Gertrude Brooke Hamilton

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NEWTON HOWITT

SHE selected several letters from the packet and put up a lovely hand to switch on the drop-light. Its glow vivified her flowing, tawny hair, waxen skin and black-lashed, coppery eyes—illuminated the bronze appointments of her ebony writing-table, purpled the pool in her jeweled inkwell and deepened the rich window hangings of her colorful room. Below the windows the tide of Manhattan broke and thundered on the shores of Seventy-second Street and Broadway. She spread the selected letters on the ebony table and began to read:

DEAR MISS GILDER.
I rec'd your most helpful letter at 5.40 to-day.

Please excuse pencil. The ink is froze. Also please excuse, as usual, my uphill fist and bum spelling.

My married sis, Mrs. Pink Tibberly, is in a worrie to know who you are—she has brot me some of your letters from the P. O. But I wont tell her. I want the secret to myself. Just think. for 3 fine yrs you—Zola Gilder, a New York writer and poet—writing cheering letters to me—Martin Redd, a clodhopper!

Ever since I was old enuff to day-dream I have wanted to know some one like you. But when I first writ you in the care of a magazine, because that story of yours "Just Nature" had made me blubber, I calculated I was cutting fodder to rot. That first pretty, polite letter from you I wore under my shirt for 30 days. And then I seen your picture in a magazine. Shivering snakes! I

went down on my big knees to what you had writ to me! It was 7:1/2 months before I hunched up the nerve to fist my pen again. And you writ back. And I writ back. And dearest, we kept company in letters.

Please excuse the "dearest" for you are dear to me. I have never seen you. Calculate I never will. But I don't think you ought to blame me for loving you as much as it is possible for a man to love a woman. You are good and noble. You make the farm chunks around here look like 30 cts. You know something else besides corset covers and boys and baking biscuits. You have told me 50 fine books to read. I love, honor and adoor you.

If this makes you mad, I am realy and truly sorry. also please forgive me.

Have just finished reading your story "Ships That Pass In The Day." I think it the sweetest one yet—a sort of sad-sweet story. Will get the currant magazine you mention. As usual, I gave the "Ship" story to my sis, Mrs. Pink Tibberly, to read.

I am very sorry to hear of your having a cold, but it is no suprise to me, as I know you work to hard. You need fresh air and buttermilk. Dearest, I haven't taken a dose of Dr.'s dope for a cold or anything else for over 14 yrs and I hope I never do again.

Does it make you mad for me to call you dearest? If it does, please tell me so and please forgive me. For I would not hurt or harm you in any way, shape or form. Please an'sr soon.

Your humble friend,
MARTIN REDD.



She spread the selected letters on the ebony table and began to read.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

Yours rec'd at 6.27 this evening.

I was begining to feel that you was mad at me because I told you I loved you. I would like for to tell you heaps of such things, but I calculate you would laugh at me and think me a fool. But honest I could just fairly chaw you up—I like and love you so well.

After I writ that last letter to you I saddled my mare Crystal Herne and rode 16 hrs straight. The coarse grass on the prairie didn't seem no coarser than me handing you—Zola Gilder—a josh word like "dearest." I drove Crystal and myself to a dripping sweat. On the way home I stopped at Tibberly farm. My married sis Pink was feeding her chickens. I grabbed the mush-pot from her, and before I knew it I was telling her who my girl was. Sis sat down hard and took off her glasses to squint at me. Her eyes are so bad now that she can't read much, so she hasn't read your current story "The Shack Woman," but she will now as fast as she can. Sis thinks I ought to worship you (which I do) bow down and say my prayers to you—which I've done.

Please excuse me for calling you *my girl* to Sis. I know you are not for me, only to dream about, but in my dreams you are my girl. I wonder if you will be mad when you read this. I had a dream last night which I would like for to tell you about.

My Dream.

The date sliped up a few notches and it was midsummer, balmy and fair. I rec'd a letter from you saying you was coming out here. I hitched Crystal to the buggy and drove S. E. along the little lane from our house to the road—then turned E. to the big road called Clinton Road in the country and Clinton Ave. in town. I followed the Road to a little hill about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile long. Then I turned E. and drove over a new concrete bridge—the sides big walls of solid concrete and steel. I drove on over the grade, with Salt Creek running E. at the foot of the grade. There was no houses—all farm ground and pasture. Then I left the grade, drove up a hill—and was on the prairie.

You was there waiting for me. You

was just what I know you are, a tall, straight-backed girl with fairy feet and flying hair and something that smells of God about you—like the girls you write of in your stories, like your face in the magazine pictures. You come running to meet me, and as you run you threw off your fine New York clothes and underneath them you wore a print dress and under your shirt you wore that picture of me with my best yearling that I sent you 2 yrs ago.

When you got close by me you stopped, sort of shy, and said, "Howdy, Martin Redd."

And I—pertending I was stuck-up and cityish, and wanting the laugh on you said, "Excuse me. At what hog show did we meet? I can't calculate to remember, Miss Zola."

And you hung your head and shook your flying hair over your eyes and you begun to cry.

And *man alive!* I went down on my big fool knees to you right then and there.

And you laughed quicker than you cried. You run—you was lighter than dandelion fluff—to Crystal and kissed the white star on her forehead and you jumped into the buggy and grabbed up the reins and hollered—"Giddap!"

Crystal backed in the traces and begun to skid. I got in and took the reins. Crystal reared, shayed, laid back her ears and let loose! She had us home in about 5 minutes.

Before the buggy quit swaying you was out of it, dancing by the barn, touching the head of my Holstein heifer, kissing the cat that has double-pawed kittens, wading and capering thro the S. W. field of clover, grabbing up apples and pears and biting into them and throwing them over your shoulder and running all the time to my mother, throwing yourself into her arms and crying. And all the time dancing with your feet.

For supper we chawed something. I never dreamed what. After supper I raced you to the barn. You tiptoed into it and kissed Crystal eating oats and corn in her stall. And mooed at the cows, Blossom and Lillian Russell, munching their straw, and shook your hair over the guinea fowls squeaking to get out of the

barred back doors. And like a squirrel you scampered to the hay lofts. I climbed after you. You got to the highest loft and spread out your arms like a bird and sailed down 10 ft and lay there for a minute beautiful and rosy and climbed up again, and said, "Unbar the back doors of the barn, Martin Redd. Let the crying guinea fowls out. And show me the view.

I pulled back the wooden bars and opened the whole back of the barn and you spun out on your tiptoes and whirled about and shrieked with joy at the view. You can see 5 counties—a river—and about 1000 acres of heavy timber from the back of our barn. It is like standing in the clouds with the angels so high up that you can't see no people—just spires and the tops of things. You got sort of solemn over it and you cuddled close to my side and your hand stole up to my breast and lay there.

Next thing—you was laughing. I was fixing a swing for you under the stars. It was N. E. of the clover field where the view is high again. You leaped into the swing and swung up touching the trees. Down, brushing by to quick for me to kiss you.

Next Mother was giving you a foaming pitcher of milk to drink. You drunk and drunk till we all laughed and loved you and worshiped you and went clean mad about you. Mother took you to the S. W. bedroom that is next to hers and she give you a lamp. It shed a sort of a glory over you. We like for to have died from *honoring* you.

You said—looking at the flame of the lamp, "Martin Redd, I love you—I love Crystal Herne, and the cows and the heifer, and the guinea fowls and the double-pawed kittens and your Mother and your married sis, Mrs. Pink Tibberly." And sly as a little spider you spun into the S. W. room and shut the door on me. Mother and Sis run down to the kitchen and begun to break eggs and cream butter and sift flour for the wedding cake.

In the night—when I was prowling under the window of the S. W. room—I heard the sash slip up. You put a foot over the sill and jumped down.

I said, "Where are you going?"

And you changed into a farm chunk. Dearest, I woke up blubbering. If this dream ofends you I am truly sorry.

The robins have come and the wild duck and geese are going north but we have had several flurries of snow—about 1 inch deep last night.

How is your work getting on? I wonder if when things go wrong you would like for some big strong person to take you in his arms and make you forget worrie—past and future.

I told you about 13 months ago what I look like. I am 6 ft., weigh 170 lbs. have yellow hair and gray eyes, sound teeth, high nose and reddish skin.

Hope you are well and prosperous. Write when you can.

As ever your humble friend,
MARTIN REDD.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

I got your splendid one Sunday at 10.12.

As usual, your letter cheered me. You—so different from others.

I have the magazine with your new picture in it. Sis seen the picture in a neighbor girl's copy. Sis told me about it and I rode to the neighbor's house at night and borrowed the copy on pertence I wanted to look at some ad. It was bright moonlight when I rode back. I held the magazine under the moon and ate up that beautiful face with kisses.

Dearest, I have thought it all over and there is no use to hope for what can't or never will be. I love, honor and adoor you, but I am going to try to give up that first part—love. Honor you I always will. I calculate you thought me a sure ninny to write to you like I done about that dream. I will try from now on to stick closer to the ground and not let my big feet sail me up to the clouds.

Dearest, I have always wanted a woman like you, one with brains and soul as well as beauty of body and face. I think of you as I think of the flowers and the stars and the sweetness that comes over the hills with the spring. A losing think. You can't never marry me.

At 7.30 this morning when I opened the back doors of the barn to clear it out I had a day-dream.

My day-dream—We Take a Ride Together.

It is Sunday, windy and clear. The buggy has been washed and Sis has loaned me her blue plush lap-robe to put over the seat. Crystal whinnies and frets to be off. Ready, dearest? Woman alive! what color the wind puts into your cheeks—they are like 2 sweet apples tempting me and your lips smell of the clover blossom and none of your city friends would know you in that hat Sis loaned you and Sis wont know her hat when she sees it on *your* head—bright blue streamers tied under your chin and floating down your pretty shoulder.

Where shall we go?

Anywhere?

Giddap, Crystal!

She paces along at a lazy gait and switches at the flies. We lean back against the blue plush robe—tuck the horse-blanket around us and enjoy the air. You don't mind if the buggy isn't new and I am nothing but a plowman. You love me as I love you.

Want to look at the scenery? All right. These big hard maple trees on the south of the grade is Owens' Grove—when I was a kid the 4th of July celibrations was always held there. East is the old Doyle homestead—only one brother left about 74 yrs. worth \$50000 and has no relatives. Now we are coming to Harris, named after a wealthy land owner. He has one of the most up-to-date and finest farms in the world joining this station. He raises hundreds of hogs every year and hundreds of cattle is shipped in from Chicago and other places—and then fattened and shipped out again.

Now we are crossing the Big 4 track and going along the edge of the railroad. Now we are angling to the N. E. to a cross road. Now we twist and turn until we reach Mansfield—the Wabash and Big 4. We are driving past Firke's house in the north edge of Mansfield where he feeds southern geese by the thousand in the fall and winter. Now we go along Main street and out of town a mile south.

We drive across a small slough known as Madden's Run. The alfalfa pastures are green and fine. The wind is fresh.

Oats and wheat grow on each side of the road. We turn S. W. for about 2 miles. We are on the edge of the woods. We cross a brook and drive into a heavy woods. This is the most beautiful tract of timber I ever was in. Notice how the baby trees brush against the buggy as we drive by?

Here is an open space large enuff to turn in. I will unhitch Crystal and tie her to a sapling. Let's take a stroll thro the woods. There is over 600 acres of this heavy timber. See—we are now away from the big road down a wild bypath. See this giant sycamore 6 ft. thro. See these big white oaks almost as large. See this brook. Let me dip you up water to drink and make a cup of my hands. Let me fold my coat for you to sit on. Let me pick flowers and leaves for you to sail in the brook.

What do we care if it is growing late and the sun is going down? I trust you and you trust me.

With all my love,

MARTIN REDD.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

I sent you a letter some months ago. Like to never got it mailed as I was in the woods cutting timber for 2 weeks on a stretch.

We are having some cussed weather. Spring don't seem to be coming this yr. everything is covered with sleet and ice. Telephone lines is nearly all down and things in bum shape generaly. I wonder how cold it gets in New York. It gets 30 below real often here, sometimes 35 and 40.

Please forgive me for that last letter. I calculate I deserve the 10 weeks silence you have handed me. Also please excuse ink blots. Time to feed the hogs.

Hope you are well and happy.

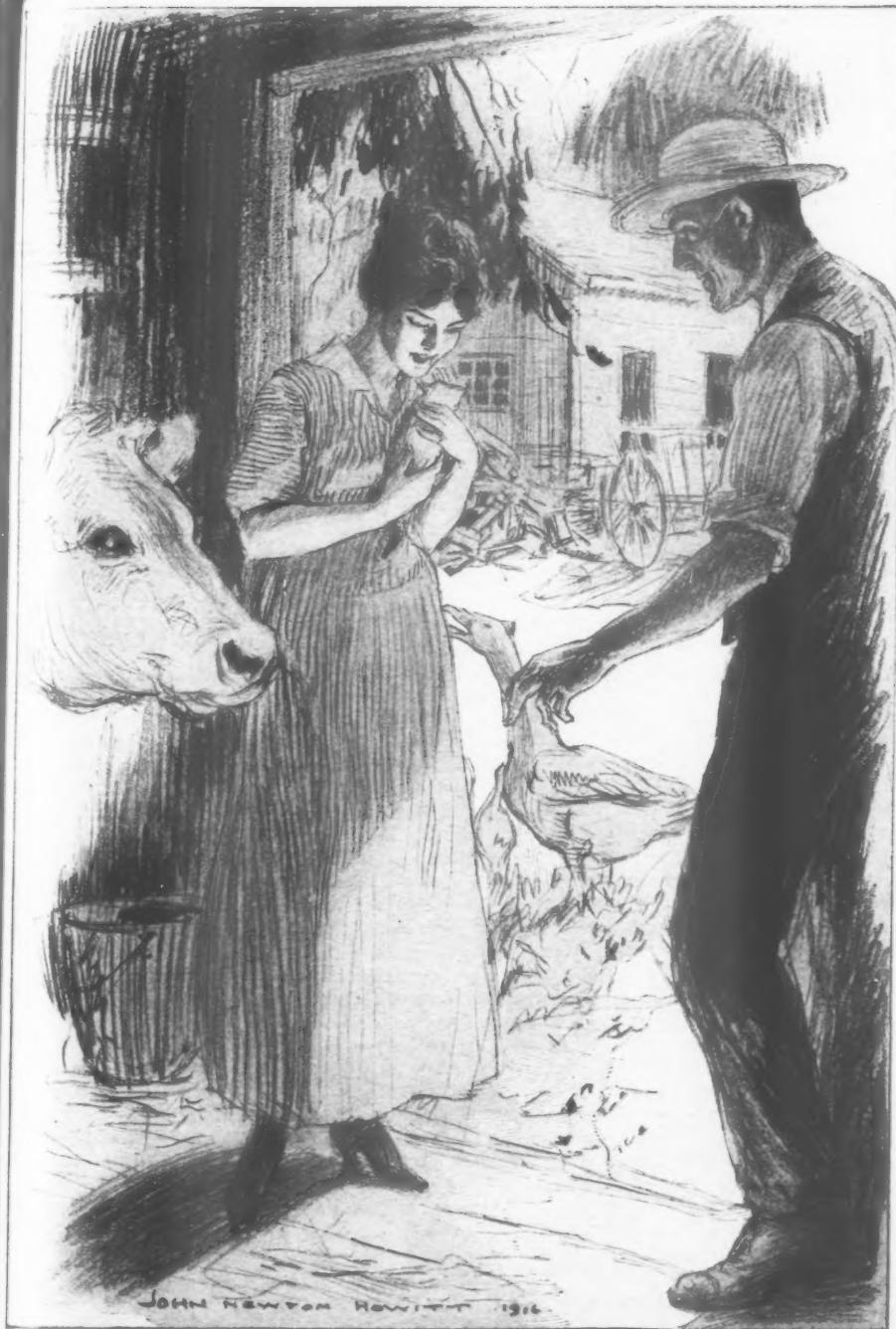
Your humble friend,

MARTIN REDD.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

Honest? do you want another drive? We're off!

I am not going to tell you a thing about the sights along the road! Now you're half mad at me and there is a frown on your beautiful face. I am going to talk about you and to you. I have



JOHN NEWTON HOWITT 1916

Before the buggy quit swaying you was out of it, dancing by the barn, touching the head of my Holstein heifer, and kissing the cat that has double-pawed kittens.

told you I love you and I am going to tell some more! Now you're smiling a sort of impossible smile.

We are getting way out in the country now. I am putting my arm around your dainty waist. You are laughing a little bit thinking what a fool I am. I calculate it's fine to be foolish—sometimes.

Here comes a auto-go-to-hell machine! Shall I take my arm away? By Sykes, no! We don't give a durn!

I only want to tell you I love you. I only want to kiss you—like—that!

We are to the timber lands again. I will unhitch Crystal in a hurry. Now—you are in my arms. You wont tell me you love me? You only smile and wont look at me and ask foolish questions about the trees. But for all that you are glad—aren't you, dearest? You are glad you're where you are—in my arms. Tired? Lay your head down on my shoulder. There. I am looking into your eyes. You have the eyes of a little child. I respect you. I love you. I ador you. Why shouldn't I hold you in my arms? You only smile! You're an awful sweet little girl but the cat's got your tongue on the love question. You smile more than ever! The idea of you talking love with a clodhopper!

Tell me about your life in New York. When you dance in some of them palaces do you ever think of my blundering feet? When you talk to other men do you think of me? When some city man goes mad over you and does *his* day dreaming—do you laugh?

Still—I have loved. And you are not angry.

I calculate I have done wrong in letting myself grow to love you. We can't never get married. But let me love you—love you—madly—till our drive is done.

Yes, I knew you would put your arms around me and give me that kiss!

Good-by. Sail your soul over to me sometimes.

As ever,
MARTIN REDD.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

Yours of the 22nd arrived on Christmas Day. I am happy to hear about your good luck about your work and

sorry you was to busy to write to me for 3 months.

I have lost \$400. worth of hogs. That wont seem a very large sum to you.

I read your story "No King But Caesar" and thought it fine. It hits a world of women—the women in the world. As usual, I gave the Caesar story to my sis, Mrs. Pink Tibberly, to read.

Am glad you got a smile off my mare's name. She is all right. When the mare was a baby it seemed that one of her eyes was going to be what people call *glass eye* an eye that is *white*. I decided on the Crystal partly on account of the crystal-like eye and partly for Crystal Herne. I seen her once in a play when I was in Chicago and thought her fine.

I am glad you are coming to the good money. Hope you are able to keep it up. I am not like you for I don't want heaps of coin or fame.

I wont bother you with any more.

I love you.

Your humble friend,
MARTIN REDD.

DEAR MISS GILDER.

I went to a corn roast in these parts last night.

The men build a big camp fire in the field. The girls bring corn and salt and marshmallows sometimes rolls and hot sausages. They sit around the camp fire and eat and tell stories. There is always a funny fellow and a girl who recites sad pieces. Once I could laugh at that fellow and the pieces always brot tears to my eyes. Last night I sat like a stiff in the crowd. I saw your face in the big camp fire. Your arms reached out to me in the licking flames. Your curling mouth laughed at the bunch I went with—guyed my friends, guyed me, sang up to the stars in the smoke from the fire and made fun of the clodhopper who had gone star-gazing. It come to me in a crack that the love making was always on my side and that it wasn't getting me nowhere. I calculated I was getting tired of kisses on paper. I sort of flared up high as the camp fire and put the blame on you. You have crammed my head with 75

books and set me blubbering over your stories and writ me letters to wear under my shirt. And I'll be thirty next birthday.

This is for you *alone*. I want to work for you, to do things to please you. I want you to like the things I like and I like the things you like—to hold you in my arms evenings and tell you that same old sweet story over and over and over. I love you! You can't never marry me. What is the end of real love but marriage?

What did you learn me to love you for?

MARTIN REDD.

DEAREST.

I could grab you in my arms and murmur lots of things in your ear and lay your head on my shoulder—and blubber. All of which would make you justly mad!

I am tipping my hat to you for that lock of hair. It is realy beautiful hair. I have your pictures propped up in front of me as I write. The 3 I have cut from magazines. I wish I was at your side that I might stroke that beautiful hair and kiss and caress you. I don't feel like telling you nothing but I love you. I wonder how you would like for me to come into your room and love you savagely, to take up your hair in my hands and bury my face in it, to look into your eyes and find nothing but purity there. But on the other hand if you was the Devil's own Daughter and your hair was coils of glittering snakes I would love you. You couldn't do nothing low or mean enuff to keep me from loving you.

I am going to ride 18 hrs. straight and think it out.

My Thoughts.

At first I thought I would come to New York and give you back your letters and only slightly smile when I saw you and then come back home after having just loved you with my eyes.

And then—dawn was on the prairie when I come to my 2nd thought—I felt my big, young body and the muscles in my arms. I thought of the \$3000 I have in the Fairbanks bank in Mansfield and the 200 good acres I own. I looked

at my hands—brown and hard enuff to protect any soft white hand that would trust itself to it. I thought of my married sis, Mrs. Pink Tibberly, who thinks me good enuff for any woman. And my Mother who says I am the handsomest man around these parts. And the farm chunks who any one of them would jump at slinging hash for me.

My 3rd thought was about Love.

My 4th thought was You. I read the beautiful things between the lines of your letters. I heard you calling me. I saw you in New York—pestered by men—fighting for your fame and money—and all the while resting in my big ugly arms.

For you are mine by the right of my manhood—by the right that hasn't nothing to do with schooling—by the right that made Eve belong to Adam.

I am coming to New York to pick you up in my arms and bring you back with me. You're mine! My friend! my girl! my ideal! my pal! my saint! my wife! Those fairy feet of yours may run fast, dearest, but they shant outrun your clodhopper's hoofs. In all my dreams you get away from me. I am going to quit dreaming! I am coming to New York to pick you up in my arms and bring you back with me!

I love you so I am sick and humble from love. My knees knock at the thought of coming into your presence. My eyes blubber. I am like an old man with a young man's lungs. I am feeble and powerful—glad and blue—resolute and uncertain—shouting and afraid—bold and hanging back.

Tell me to come. Tell me you love me.

MARTIN REDD.

MISS ZOLA GILDER.

I would like for to kill you for your letter rec'd today at 12.50.

I would like for to come into your room and put the marks of my fingers on your white shoulders and stamp with my feet on your feet and use my horsewhip on your beautiful back.

You begin your letter with some French that I can't read because I don't know no language but my own. You

go on to say that you are not the marrying sort—that my letters have been one long, big laugh to you—that the only reason you encouraged them was to get what you call copy—that a clodhopper story you hope to sell for \$500. is already in your typewriter—that love is a fairy tale that brings so much a word—that nothing funnier could be imagined than Zola Gilder jumping about in hay lofts and nestling up to a six-foot son of the soil! You end your letter with some Latin that you know I can't read. And with that you are thro.

Well so am I. Here are your letters, the lock of your hair and the magazine pictures of you, you beauty, you she-wolf.

I am glad you got a \$500. laugh out of me.

I love you.

THE CLODHOPPER.

SHE replaced the letters in the packet and put out lovely hands to pick up a pair of crutches. Slowly she got to her feet and crossed her colorful room to an electric button. She punched white light in abundance over the room. At her ebony-framed, full-length mirror she took stock of her flowing, tawny hair, well-chiseled brow, black-lashed, coppery eyes, delicate nose, idealistic nostrils and red, wistful mouth. Pulling a shimmering mass of hair over her shoulder and half turning from her mirror, she gave a slant stare at the hump on her back and at her shrunken legs and crippled, club feet. She spread her hands on her crutches and began to sob.

The telephone rang. Zola Gilder answered it.

"Mr. Martin Redd, of Illinois, calling," came the metallic voice of the hotel clerk.

"Who?" Zola gasped.

"Mr. Martin Redd, of Illinois, calling," replied the mechanical voice.

Zola Gilder's face went white. "Martin Redd—calling!" she repeated. In swift succession, panic, joy, apprehension, despair, possessed her features.

She moistened her lips, and said into the telephone: "Have Mr. Martin Redd shown up to my suite."

Her hand, as she put the receiver into the hook, went weak. Her shoulders rested heavily on her crutches. She seemed about to crumple up like an imperfect rose-petal at the end of a perfect summer.

Then the spirit that shone in her coppery eyes conquered her weakness. Resolutely she moved to the center of the room, where the light from the chandelier fell full upon her.

Outside, in the softly padded corridor, feet passed and repassed. Somewhere a room-telephone tinkled. The heavy sound of a trunk-truck rumbled by.

An elevator-door clanged. A tread, different from the rest, came along the corridor. The knock that smote her door reverberated through the suite.

With wild, uneven steps, hampered by her infirmity, she rushed to her door—and locked it.

The knock came again. It was, perhaps, the *rap-rap* of knuckles fisted to strike.

Zola leaned against the door and put her paling lips on the wood where the knock sounded. "Martin Redd," she whispered dryly, "go away! What have you come for?"

A hand wrenching the door-knob. A heavy foot struck against the satin panel of the door. It seemed as if a giant shoulder might be placed against the wood and the door might come crashing in.

Zola Gilder unlocked the door and moved back to her position under the chandelier. "Come in," she said.

Martin Redd opened the door—and was in the room. He carried a rawhide whip.

Zola Gilder spread out her lovely hands on the rungs of her crutches. "Howdy, Clodhopper," she said faintly.

Martin Redd's balked, baffled stare played on her exquisite face and hair—and on her body.

"You see," she said with a three-cornered smile, "I *would* be funny jumping about in hay-lofts."

His look of amazement increased.

She shook back her flowing hair. The movement revealed the nobility of her brow, the beauty of her eyes, the idealism of her nostrils and the redness of

her mouth. "You wouldn't want to come into my room and love me savagely, would you?" she faltered.

Martin Redd took a step toward her and stood still.

Zola Gilder smiled. For the second, her face was all that a man might dream of.

Then renunciation leveled and controlled her face. "I am glad you came, Martin Redd," she said slowly. "I am glad I have had the courage to see you. I am glad to be able to tell you that I did not encourage you to obtain what I call copy. I have not written a clodhopper story. I was lying."

Her voice sank, became infinitely sweet. "Now that you have seen me, you can go back and happily marry a 'farm chunk.' Now that you have seen me, you can forget—or laugh. For it is funny!" She pulled a mass of hair over her shoulder, with brave, tragic humor, exposing her deformity. "See how far I am from the woman you have wanted, Martin. Brains I have, and soul, and beauty of face—" Her tragedy shook her.

His arms hung at his sides, inanimate as his stare.

The slow, luminous calm of the spirit challenging the physical composed her. The spirit transcended the physical. "You can never marry me," she said sadly. Her face colored. "What is the real end of love but marriage?"

She seemed to wither. "I have done wrong in deceiving you," she stammered. "Use your whip on my—back." She hung her head and shook her tawny hair over her eyes and began to cry.

Martin Redd placed the rawhide

whip on her ebony writing-table beside the jeweled inkwell.

A step took him to her.

Gently he threw away the crutches and picked her up in his arms. "Blubber on my onery shoulder, dearest," he said, in a rich voice. "Please excuse the 'dearest,' for you are dear to me."

He walked her up and down the gorgeous room, stroking her beautiful hair—kissing and caressing her.

Below the windows, the tides of Manhattan broke and thundered on the shores of Seventy-second Street and Broadway. As an automobile-siren screamed in the streets, Zola laid a hand on Martin's breast.

"You cannot marry me!" she cried.

"I fail for to see why," he answered.

"I am misshapen."

"I calculate that don't make no difference."

"But Martin, I am a cripple!"

"You're my girl." He rocked and cradled her. "You're glad you're where you are, in my big, ugly arms. Aren't you, dearest? Lay your head down on my shoulder. There." The rich voice was humble. "If you will let me take you back with me, you'll do me honor. I love you."

Her hand on his breast, lighter than a snowflake, seemed to melt there. Her face on his shoulder became less the face of a child-sufferer, less the face of a brilliant recluse—more the face of a woman who would play her woman's part.

A delicate and courageous ecstasy flowed through Zola Gilder's whisper, "I could die from honoring you, Martin Redd."

"A SON
OF A NEW NOVEL BY
KAZAN"

Begins in the
next—the
March—issue

on the
news-stands
February 23rd.

James
Oliver
Curwood



Have You a Weak Chin?

A story of the study that almost wrecked Oldetown.

By Ida M. Evans

THE whole stormy affair was laid at Melinda Loomis' door. She took the blame on herself, saying bitterly (to herself) that she might as well take the blame, before Anne Gilsey meanly threw it on her. For even Jonathan Burry said significantly that now it was hardly likely Ed Gilsey would ever be able to give him a raise of salary.

It was an exceedingly stormy affair. Recriminations and personalities were hurled like hailstones. No such recriminatory recriminations or personal personalities had ever before been heard in Oldetown—or, it is to be hoped, in any town. Four damage-suits resulted; and two homes, at least, were broken up—perhaps permanently: Mrs. Holders flew home to her mother, saying hotly that she would *not* spend the rest of her life with a man whose idea of rich humor was to taunt her with the fact that her pale eyebrows signified a weak and malign intellect. And old Dr. Kelly went acridly to board at the City Hotel instead of giving in to Mrs. Kelly when

ILLUSTRATED BY F. FOX she demanded that he have a brother surgeon cut his ears over, because a thick helix and a large lobe denote a materialistic nature.

Certainly it cannot be denied that if it hadn't been for Melinda, none of the affair would have happened. If in the first place she had never mentioned—

"But how could I know?" miserably protested Melinda—only to her father, though, and he was slightly hard of hearing.

Just then, however, he was about the only person in Oldetown with whom his miserable middle-aged daughter was on free speaking terms. When the majority of your fellow townswomen take it upon themselves to inform you that your underlip shows intense obstinacy and ill-temper—However, Melinda Loomis was not alone in such situation. Hardly anyone in Oldetown was speaking to anyone else.

But if Melinda caused all the trouble, she had done so most innocently. And such an innocent little remark it was! While hulling peas on her small, neat

back porch one sunny morning in May, Melinda merely remarked to Anne Gilsey and Mrs. Jocelyn that she had just lost a dollar and a half. Anne, Melinda's best friend, a gentle, prim little woman, much given to philanthropy and church works, had run in the back way to borrow a spool of gray thread. Mrs. Jocelyn, a faded widow who had the south front upstairs bedroom of the Loomis boarding-house, was down on the porch to wash and touch up with walnut stain her rather thin hair.

Lost it foolishly, Melinda candidly added. She had told a hobo asking for work (at least, he looked like a hobo) that he might clean off the back yard, a spring job that her old father usually attended to, but which he had this year been prevented by rheumatism from doing. When she came to pay the fellow, Melinda had nothing smaller than a two-dollar bill and no one to send for change but ten-year-old Bertie Downs; and even Bertie's fond mother wouldn't trust him with ten cents—he had so angelic a way of looking you frankly in the eye while he sadly confided that he had lost the money down a crack in one of Oldtown's board sidewalks. So Melinda preferred to trust the hobo, and told him to get the bill changed at the garage two blocks away. Of course he never came back.

MELINDA sighed soberly. Dollars were not plentiful with her. As she often confided to Anne, keeping boarders calls for close work—especially since Mrs. Jocelyn had begun to try to put on flesh, hoping to get a Venus-like contour on a form that nature had fashioned meagerly.

But though sober, the sigh was not acutely unhappy. Melinda did not expect to keep boarders much longer. She expected to marry Jonathan Burry, a shy, middle-aged fifth cousin who had filled prescriptions at Ed Gilsey's drug-store so long that his face seemed a pharmaceutical scrawl of wrinkles. He had boarded with Melinda fourteen years, but he had a forlorn, chivalric notion that he shouldn't marry her till he had made a million dollars or so on some patent lubricant or other. Melinda

stayed awake nights—when she wasn't too sleepy—thinking up arguments to combat this foolish notion of Jonathan's.

Anne was very sympathetic over the lost dollar and a half. Anne Gilsey could always be depended upon to be sympathetic, whatever your mishap or whatever its cause. It was a gentle virtue and one that went far to compensate for certain of Anne's faults.

But Mrs. Jocelyn said right out: "You were a fool, Melinda."

Good-naturedly Melinda admitted that she was. "But he looked honest," she excused herself.

"Huh! You never can tell by a person's looks," sniffed Mrs. Jocelyn, shaking her streaked locks out in the sun.

"Not always," gently qualified Anne, for a few minutes helping Melinda hull.

"You can if you know how, I've heard," said Melinda carelessly. "I believe there's books that explain what every shape of feature and even the color of your hair means. I always thought they'd be interesting books—if a person ever had time to study 'em"—with a plaintive glance down at the heaped basket. A peck of peas did not suffice for Melinda's lunch-table.

"I've heard that gray eyes are a sign



Mrs. Helders flew home to her mother, saying hotly that she would not spend the rest of her life with a man whose idea of rich humor was to taunt her with the fact that her pale eyebrows signified a weak and malign intellect.



Old Dr. Kelly went acridly to board at the City Hotel instead of giving in to Mrs. Kelly when she demanded that he have a brother surgeon cut his ears over, because a thick helix and a large lobe denote a materialistic nature.

one is intellectual," interestedly observed Mrs. Jocelyn, who always described her own eyes as gray, though some folks, Jim Downs for one, dubbed them grass-green.

"I've always heard a small chin was sign of a weak will," said Anne. "These are real nice peas for this time of year, Melinda."

"Well, that isn't true," said Mrs. Jocelyn decidedly. "Because Bertie Downs has hardly a smidgeon of a chin, and no one can budge the little brat after he makes up his mind to do anything."

Knowing that Mrs. Downs' window just above the porch was open, Melinda hastily changed the subject to the new

college that a wealthy ex-brewer was proposing to erect in Oldetown as a sort of propitiation to his fellow-men and Creator. Oldetown was patting itself on the back over the unexpected honor and profit. It had been chosen, as the healthiest and best-situated, out of a dozen other eager sites. Oldetown parents, especially those unable to send their children away to college, were jubilant. Such luck! Mrs. Downs said that providence was certainly looking out for her bright Bertie, thank heaven, for his shiftless drummer father would never sell enough cigars to pay the child's railroad fare to the next county seat. Melinda's father and old Mr. Hayes, a distant relative of her

dead mother, who also boarded with her, expectantly hoped to make congenial acquaintances among the faculty. Mrs. Jocelyn wondered if all the professors would be married men. Ed Gilsey already was planning to put plate-glass windows in his drug-store, for three or four hundred college students would mean wonderful trade, and Melinda was secretly hoping that with more trade Ed might raise Jonathan Burry's salary, or perhaps take him into partnership. He certainly deserved it, after all these years.

NATURALLY, talking about the new college, all three forgot, for the time being, what had been said just previously. And naturally, when three or four days later Anne Gilsey, her prim, gentle face unwontedly excited, ran up the back steps, waving an open magazine, and cried, "Melinda, read this! And I might never have noticed it if you hadn't mentioned the subject the other day!" Melinda at first did not know what she was referring to.

Puzzled, she read the full-page advertisement of a series of lessons (correspondence) which would enable you to classify and translate the mental, physical and moral significance of every feature, curve, angle, texture and hue known to physiognomy. After a sincere and intelligent study of this course (cost unstated), you could—so vowed the glowingly worded advertisement—merely glance at friend or neighbor, employer or employee, prospective partner for business or for life, and instantly know the real character of the person at whom you were glancing.

When she had read it, Melinda was not much impressed, although she admitted that it might be interesting if you had the time and the money to spare. Mrs. Jocelyn and Mrs. Downs, who were present, shared her unimpressed attitude. Mrs. Downs (who was down on the back porch laundering Bertie's second-best white waist) said pessimistically that such a course might have been valuable to her once, but now she was married to

Jim Downs and had to do most of her own washing, and it was too late. At this a gleam of interest shot into Mrs. Jocelyn's eyes, and she read the page again. But Mrs. Jocelyn's income was limited to the rent from three cottages in the poorer part of Oldetown, and she had to consider carefully the cost of her living. "It doesn't state the price, I see," she said.

"I'm sure it won't cost much," cried Anne. "And it's a wonderful opportunity for us older women who never had a college in our town when we were young."

"Your ma and pa wanted to send you to the State university, Anne," reminded Melinda, "but you insisted on marrying Ed instead."

"And I've always regretted it—the university, I mean," said Anne. "Especially now that this college is coming to Oldetown and doubtless will bring in its train a class of residents who will cause many of us to feel inferior mentally!"

"I—I suppose so," admitted Melinda. "But—you remember?" She stopped uncomfortably, and flushed.

All present knew to what she referred, and the other three faces flushed—Anne's pinkest. Not long since, the women of



Melinda told the hobo to get the bill changed. Of course he never came back.

Oldetown, headed and inspired by Anne, had together tried to study a set of instructive books dealing with feminism in general, and there had arisen a terrible scandal because the representative of the New Era publishing company, from whom they bought the books, turned out, after flirting outrageously with Sadie Lane, Oldetown's pretty, youthful and flirtatious music-teacher, to be a married man. Sadie's irate mother still hung the threat of a suit for slander over the heads of half the town.

Perhaps, like many well-intentioned, excellent folks, Anne Gilsey had a streak of contrariness. It had undeniably been she who was chief inspirer of that unfortunate course of study.

"This is entirely different, Melinda," said Anne coldly—or as nearly coldly as her gentle voice could sound.

Perhaps there also was a streak of contrariness in Mrs. Downs, a fretful, fussy woman. "Possibly," she remarked, "if some one in town had taken such a correspondence-course as this, we'd have known what kind of a scamp that book-agent was," she remarked.

Melinda could not help thinking the same, though she did not say so.

"Anyone thinking of marrying the second time—" mused Mrs. Jocelyn. Then, briskly: "Why couldn't one of us take the course and all the rest of us read the lessons too? Then it wouldn't cost but a trifle apiece!"

Anne Gilsey did not think it would be quite honest for several to share a lesson meant for only one. Still—

"They seem philanthropic and anxious to benefit humanity," she admitted. "At least their advertisement reads that way. Perhaps they wouldn't mind."

"They wouldn't know," said Mrs. Jocelyn. "So they couldn't mind."

IT is an undeniable fact that there is nothing so fascinatingly interesting as the human face. It is the tablet of the age and the ages. Everyone is his own Moses and must inscribe it, whether he will or not. Melinda Loomis afterward said that at the time, she had a premonition that trouble would ensue. (Something unpleasant, it oddly seemed, always happened when Anne Gilsey was trying

to do the most good!) But in all honesty, she had to add remorsefully that in the beginning and throughout the whole of the unfortunate affair her own curiosity in matters physiognomic was as keen as anyone's else. Moreover, she had always had a secret hankering for learning—any kind of learning separate from a cook-book and a dilapidated soft-coal range, the two main text-books of Melinda's busy, flustered life. Jonathan Burry, for all his taciturnity and shyness, could decipher any Latin ever scrawled by a physician. Melinda was humble-minded, but at times she was envious. When the college was first mentioned, she wished wistfully that she too was young enough to take advantage of it.

So, as Anne primly enthused, Melinda caught the contagion of enthusiasm. Others caught it too. The women of the town took to the new science—or old science newly presented—like tadpoles to a pond. Anne urged only a few to join. Perhaps she was more ashamed of the former disastrous attempt at mental improvement than her friends guessed. But everyone rushed to join; possibly (for the contrariness of human nature is great) the rush was greater because so little urging was made. Mrs. Holders said at once that she'd always thought Mr. Holders didn't belong in the grocery business, and now she would find out positively. Mrs. Brady confided that she'd dabbled in the science of physiognomy before she was married and always knew that you must distrust anyone with a hawk chin—it was a sign of dishonesty or second-sight, she'd forgotten which. Mrs. Jenkins threw her arms around Melinda's neck and kissed her—she was so appreciative of the opportunity to classify the young Jenkins' features and plan what profession they belonged to.

Afterward Melinda saw she should have taken warning from Mrs. Brady's confidence and also from the avidity with which her father and old Mr. Hayes helped dissect the first lesson, which was studied in the Loomis sitting-room, as the most central meeting-place. Usually these self-centered old gentlemen showed small interest in anything other than politics or diet; usually they—and

Jonathan Burry as well—quietly slipped out to smoke on the back porch when women callers occupied the sitting-room. But Melinda herself was too interested in that introductory lesson to be on the lookout for warnings that physiognomy is too ticklish a subject to be studied with common avidity by townspeople who have known each other all their lives.

And any warning would have fallen on deaf ears during the first month. Every woman in town had a new and pleasant interest. With this lesson-learning there seemed somehow to come some of the old school-age zest for life. There was a happy feeling of common pride when each lesson had been discussed and mailed, a happy common thrill when another was due in the mail. There was much visiting,—morning, afternoon and evenings,—a hum of new words—*concave, eccentric, concentric, spatulate, cogitative, motive*. For a while the largest noise in Oldetown was the flutter of leaves of dictionaries. It took time for brains, rusted by middle-age and the monotony of housework, to understand just what was meant by the "equilateral triangle of the eye, ear and jaw," or "the angle of the anti-tragus near the concha," or "the cephalic index."

FOR several weeks no one felt competent to make personal application of any items of knowledge assimilated. Mrs. Jenkins grew tearful one evening because she simply could not remember whether *concave* or *convex* meant that a face was dished-in; and was hers either kind? Everyone laughed and assured the poor little frowsy woman that it was neither. Mrs. Brown confessed that she never heard a word of the sermon on Sunday morning but spent the entire hour scanning every nose in the church, and wasn't one bit wiser at the end of the hour, because to save her soul she couldn't be sure whether *cogitative* meant a long hook nose or a long hawk nose. To the ordinary eye the difference was slight, but according to Lesson Five, the moral qualities indicated by the two were vastly different.

It took a long time for each student to examine her own face, classify its

features and contour correctly and decide what aggregation of mental, moral and physical qualities were denoted. Mirrors and dictionaries began to be in closer and more intimate conjunction than usual. Melinda burned a big pan of creamed new potatoes (and new potatoes were expensive that month) trying to make sure whether her nostrils were broad, which according to Lesson Six indicated coarseness, or merely wide, which stood for self-confidence. She didn't like to ask anyone's else opinion, though. And it hurt and comforted her when she learned that weak eyebrows, such as she undeniably had, signify a lack of power and sometimes debility of constitution. It comforted her because she had always known that she was a good deal of a failure at running a boarding-house and a total failure at anything else. Now, in a way, she felt excused; one couldn't be expected to rise above natural disability. But of course it hurt to realize your incapacity and know that it would be lasting.

And her father,—poor old fellow,—he too had those unlucky eyebrows. No wonder he had never earned anything but a pension, and that a small one. And for the first time she was glad that Jonathan Burry was taking no interest in the course. It might not make any difference in his feelings for her—but she didn't want him to know. Rather guiltily she avoided his eyes for several days.

Others besides Melinda were hurt after a scientific communion with a mirror—a lengthy communion, with the majority. Few women in Oldetown ever dreamed that there are so many minute but ominous differences in chins and foreheads. It was difficult, even for the clever ones like Mrs. Brown, who had the benefit of Mr. Brown's legal knowledge, and Ella Jimson, who had studied elocution when she was young, to decide readily whether a chin was long-round or round-long! The two shapes don't mean the same shape at all, though certainly you would suppose they did! Then Mrs. Bracy was quite depressed after she learned that a snub nose invariably denotes littleness of disposition. And it worried Anne Gilsey (she confessed only to Melinda, though) when Lesson Eight

stated that bright eyes are a sign of wantonness! When Ed was courting Anne, he had convinced her that her blue eyes were about the brightest in the world. But Anne said indignantly and proudly that surely Oldetown would know that she was no such thing! Melinda reassured her as well as she could.

Mrs. Collins, president of the Ladies' Aid, went home early and silently the day it was learned that protruding teeth are seldom found in a liberal-minded person. But Mrs. Jocelyn held her head high and threw away two new jars of facial cream when she found that parallel, regular wrinkles across the forehead denote wisdom, intelligence and innate nobility, while down lines between the brows show close observation!

There was a thoughtful and general silence, though, when it became apparent that Sadie Fane's nose—straight, with lightly curved nostrils divided equally by the profile of the upper lip—was the only one in town indicating a refined, artistic, beautiful nature. Sadie had twenty-six music scholars, and she spent every cent she earned on her pretty, frivolous back—and every cent her shabby, fond old mother could scrimp out of the household allowance as well.

"It's—it's hard to believe," said Mrs. Holders coldly.

"It's impossible to believe," declared Mrs. Downs. "But isn't it remarkable about my Bertie—that he should have the large, clear blue eyes which show so much mental capacity?"—brightly.

NO one could tell just when those taking the course wearied of mirrors and their own physiognomic significations and began to examine (furtively) other folks' faces.

Melinda got tired, very dismally tired, of looking at her own flustered, sallow, middle-aged face with its frame of sandy hair and caught herself surreptitiously scrutinizing Jonathan's diffident visage with the many wrinkles that reminded you of nothing so much as a pharmaceutical scrawl.

And Jonathan caught her. One peculiar expression chased another over those wrinkles. He smiled, asking ruefully: "What's the verdict?" Melinda turned



Mrs. Jocelyn held her head high and threw away two new jars of facial cream when she found that parallel, regular wrinkles across the forehead denote wisdom, intelligence and innate nobility, while down lines between the brows show close observation!

red and was too confused to answer—though, as a matter of fact, she hadn't arrived at any. Like Mrs. Jenkins, Melinda could not understand all that she had learned—especially how an elongated forehead could indicate a mind destitute of elasticity, while a high forehead meant talent and benevolence. Certainly Jonathan's forehead was neither short nor low. Into which class, then, did it fall? She wished that she had paid more attention to physiology when she was in the eighth grade.

But Mrs. Downs was more sure of her information, and she said irritably that if she'd only known that Jim Downs' pointed chin denoted intense egotism and vanity, there'd have been no marriage between her and him! She said this at the dinner-table. Perhaps Jim, who was a patient man, might not have replied as he did had not Mrs. Jocelyn, over the loin of pork roast, also glanced thoughtfully at his large ears. When Mrs. Jocelyn's gray eyes were thoughtful, they were a bit spiteful. Jim said he wished to God she'd known, then! And so much more was said by both, that Melinda's father and old Mr. Hayes hastily

finished their meal and painedly left the table.

But the Downses often quarreled as hotly in the presence of others. No one attached any significance to the altercation or thought of taking a warning. Mrs. Jocelyn even forgot to tell it when the women met that afternoon, for there was a worse incident. The new lesson related, among other bits of information, that eyebrows that meet indicate a dishonest, crafty, undesirable individual.

One woman present, and only one, possessed them—Mrs. Elliot, wife of a real-estate man, and a well-liked though rather dull woman.

There was a startled silence, as involuntarily all eyes flashed to those graceful but heavy brown appendages. Mrs. Elliot went scarlet under their gaze, gasped—then said chokily: “I’ve lived among you since I was a child; surely you don’t believe—”

Instantly there was a chorus of “Of course not!” A mistake must have been made, and anyway, in Mrs. Elliot’s case everyone knew it wasn’t true! But the remainder of the study-time was constrained, and the third time Mrs. Elliot caught a furtive glance at her eyebrows she rose and said icily that she had to go home; Mr. Elliot desired an early supper.

Melinda, at least, was glad to note that the next two lessons would deal with ears. Ears seemed safer and more innocent—and Anne Gilsey troubledly remarked the same thing. Never having paid much attention to ears, both she and Melinda had a hazy idea there would be small significance about them. They both learned what it is to be greatly mistaken.

It seems that if the helix is fleshy at its commencement, very pointed at the top and then narrowing as it descends, great shrewdness in finance is indicated. It was Mrs. Jocelyn who looked at all the ears in the opera-house the night “Il Trovatore” was given by home talent, until she came to Mr. Brown’s, and they exactly fitted that description.

In the remote past Mr. Brown had managed Mrs. Jocelyn’s small property, and she had always claimed that the management had not been entirely for

her benefit. Now she bitterly confided to several that she would have been financially ahead if she had taken this scientific course years before. Her remarks got to Brown—and to Mrs. Brown—and naturally angered them.

BUT by that time there was so much anger floating around Oldetown that the Browns’ small contribution was not noticed.

Ears!

Thin, pointed, thick, round, spatulate of lobe or frail—every minute difference of shape meant something.

Ears that had wagged peacefully in Oldetown for years suddenly stood out and twitched bitterly. Old Dr. Ellis, who had gone the even tenor of his way for half a century, bristled with wrath when he heard that Mrs. Brady had used his auricular organs as an illustration of “Midas ears,” and he promptly sent Brady a dun for a bill eight years old.

Some women began to wear their hair low and waved; others immediately combed theirs defiantly high and tight as evidence that they were ashamed of *nothing*, whether it was shameful or not.

Ed Gilsey, who had obtained much amusement from the course from its beginning, said that there was one indisputable fact: all the ears in Oldetown were red. And two minutes later his were the reddest in town, for Helders, the grocer, smarting under Mrs. Brown’s remark concerning his (Helders’) thick under-eyelids (a sure sign of sensuality—oh, there had been a gasp at one meeting in Melinda’s quiet sitting-room, though out of consideration for Mrs. Helders, everyone waited till the meeting was dissolved to talk about it), taunted Ed with the fact that light-brown eyes indicate love of ease and hypochondria.

“Is that so?” snapped Ed, and went home and told Anne resentfully that he wished she’d drop that fortune-telling business.

Anne began to cry. “I wish I’d never heard of it!” she wailed. “Ever since I learned that half-shut eyes are a sign of secretiveness—Ed, won’t you confess if you’ve been leading a double life? I will forgive you—really I will!”

Ed slammed out of the house and glared viciously at the group of women whom he met. Among them was Mrs. Downs, and she remarked that excessive height of brow is a sign of idleness, but Ed Gilsey's wasn't so excessive as Tom Bracy's.

Overapplication to any science is apt to induce absent-mindedness. The six or seven women of the group had happened to meet while down on Main Street and had strolled along together. Unfortunately, Mrs. Downs had forgotten that Mrs. Bracy was walking immediately behind her.

"How dare you!" cried Mrs. Bracy indignantly. "When my husband almost works himself to death in that coal-yard every winter—why, there isn't a harder-working business man in Oldetown, though little thanks he gets from the people he helps keep warm—and most of the time he never gets paid till he threatens to go to court. I'd advise you, Mrs. James Downs, to place your attention to features nearer home! If I had a ten-year-old boy whose eyes were parallel with profile of the nose, so as to indicate weak moral organization and feeble brain—"

"It isn't true!" White with rage, Mrs. Downs stopped right in the street and fairly screamed it. "Bertie has the full forehead which shows reason, logic and ideality—"

Mrs. Jocelyn did not mean to be offensive. It was purely interest in science alone that impelled her to interrupt: "But, my dear Mrs. Downs, you know if the ear falls below the level of the eye, it shows a revengeful temper, even murderous—though"—comfortingly—"he is so young that maybe if you operated very soon—"

Mrs. Jocelyn did not finish her comforting remarks. She hastily and apprehensively stepped back four or five feet, for there was a murderous gleam in Bertie's mother's eyes. Luckily it happened that the Reverend Bloss, a melancholy but eloquent man, was approaching. His cordial smile insisted that hostility remain in abeyance till he was past. There was a stiff concert of murmured "How d'y'e do's" to him; and then, as with one impulse the group decided to separate

and continue their ways to their respective homes—solitarily.

MELINDA heard about it—first, from Mrs. Jocelyn, who airily related it. Later she heard it from Mrs. Downs, who related it tragically and implied that she could not remain longer under the same roof with the woman who had maligned her child.

Supper at the Loomis ménage was eaten in dangerous silence. Melinda was very thoughtful. She did not notice that Mrs. Downs ostentatiously gave Bertie so much rice pudding that Mrs. Jocelyn would have had none had she not reached over calmly and taken Jonathan Burry's portion. As soon as the meal was over, Melinda got the parlor lace curtains down and put them to soak in a tub of rainwater. Then she went to the telephone, called up Anne Gilsey and told her that her parlor curtains were being washed and she was sorry but wouldn't Anne have the women at her house next day for the lesson?

"Oh—oh my!" said Anne queerly, though as a rule she was delighted to open her prim, neat parlor for any worthy meeting. "Oh—oh, I suppose so."

But twenty minutes later Anne 'phoned Melinda and said, her gentle voice oddly embarrassed, that she was so sorry, but the cleaner was coming next morning for her parlor rug, and wouldn't Melinda 'phone Mrs. Bracy?

Melinda grimly 'phoned Mrs. Bracy, who took a long breath and said curtly: "Sorry, but I'm expecting the paper-hangers this week, and they might come to-morrow. Try Mrs. Brown."

Mrs. Brown frankly said "No!" She wasn't feeling well, and you never can tell—

It was finally Mrs. Holders who said bluntly that possibly Mrs. Jenkins would be willing to be the goat. Occasionally Mrs. Holders used expressions that some of the women of Oldetown did not understand and did not wholly approve of. Melinda immediately 'phoned Mrs. Jenkins. That small, frowsy woman immediately assented—with surprise and with pleasure. Very few were the occasions when the Jenkins' parlor was in

demand, except by the numerous, untidy, noisy Jenkins children. The members of the Ladies' Aid always drew a breath of relief when a duty-call there was over.

Poor Mrs. Jenkins! Perhaps she had a nose or an ear or an eyebrow indicative of stupidity. For undoubtedly she now held herself honored. Mrs. Bracy, who lived across the alley from the Jenkins home, afterward said remorsefully that it was a shame, for the poor, hard-worked, incompetent little woman got up at four o'clock that morning to scrub, sweep, scour, dust and polish her whole house for the afternoon séance. And at one-thirty she was flutteringly standing on her small, shabby front-porch, her eyes happy, her children painfully clean and white-starched, waiting to greet her guests and fellow-students.

POOR, stupid Mrs. Jenkins! It was three-thirty before a woman came near. The children managed to lose all their clean, starched whiteness and were as grimy as usual when Mrs. Bracy and Anne Gilsey at last approached, both rather ill at ease. Some one had told Bracy that morning, and he told Mrs. Bracy at the noon meal, that a long, straight upperlip indicates lack of feeling for others. Mrs. Bracy had it. Mr. Bracy implied that such possession on her part accounted for much of the hardship of his life. And Ed Gilsey had just cuttingly informed his prim, gentle but sometimes nagging wife that round blue eyes under a high bony forehead show suspicion. As the two women reached the Jenkins' gate, a shabby gray picket affair, Mrs. Downs also swept haughtily up from the opposite direction. She looked straight past Mrs. Bracy and greeted Anne Gilsey formally. Mrs. Bracy smiled lightly; her smile was as light as a bubble on a boiling caldron of hydrofluoric acid. But before she could say anything, if indeed she intended to, Mrs. Jocelyn and Melinda arrived also, and right behind them was Mrs. Helder.

Now, either abstracted or thoughtless, Mrs. Bracy had waited for Anne to push open the gate and enter. In turn, it seemed that Anne waited for Mrs. Bracy to perform that small office. Naturally,

the other three arriving at the moment waited also. It was just one of the small, strained questions of etiquette that sometimes happen.

Then Sadie Fane, flitting by between two music lessons, pretty, gayly self-satisfied in a new rose-and-tan striped sport-suit, paused for a few moments' chat with the group. Sadie hadn't studied the course; for one thing, she hadn't time, and for another she said she'd hate to know what some Oldetown faces stood for. Sadie was too flippant to be popular. (Mrs. Downs said it was like the little hussy's conceit to say that she could tell by the way a youngster laid a finger on a black key whether he'd ever make a piano-player or not, and the shape of his nose had nothing to do with it.) Mrs. Fane was with Sadie, and almost at once Mrs. Collins, Ella Jimson and several others were seen to be approaching.

"Are we to hold the meeting out here?" laughed Mrs. Jocelyn. "My, we all stand here like a flock of sheep!" With good-nature, seeing that no one else intended to, she reached to unlatch the gate—which as a matter of fact had no latch at all but was closed because its one hinge did not give it impulse to swing open.

Mrs. Jocelyn never intended that her green-gloved hand should touch Mrs. Brown's white-gloved one as she reached toward the gate. But it did. Mrs. Brown jerked away from the accidental contact as though a viper were brushing her.

Mrs. Jocelyn's hand dropped to her side; then she shrugged her thin shoulders and murmured that yellow eyes indicate deceit.

"I prefer them to grass-green affairs which are spiteful," cried Mrs. Brown.

"Oh, let's not have a meeting to-day," cried Anne Gilsey. "I've been worrying—let's go home and forget about this course."

"Forget it!" snapped Mrs. Downs. "I'm sure I for one don't want to forget it! I'll never cease to my dying day to be grateful that I've learned positively that a large mouth indicates a coarse character!"

She referred only to Mrs. Jocelyn. But there were several mouths present

which were far from small, their owners knew.

"Oh, as to that!" shrilled Mrs. Bracy, "I guess some of us are very fortunate not to have to display a low, receding forehead."

"Or a small, vindictive eye," said Mrs. Holders, glaring at Mrs. Bracy.

"Or a double chin!" said Mrs. Bracy, glaring at Mrs. Holders, "—which simply shows indulgence in physical pleasures!"

"Tell me what a flat, angular chin shows!" viciously Mrs. Holders demanded of Mrs. Bracy.

"Please don't!" wailed Anne in horror, her face white and pained—till Ella Jimson said impatiently: "Keep still, Anne—if you can with a chin which shows garrulity!" Then her face turned crimson. And Anne—gentle Anne!—cried hysterically at Ella Jimson: "Well, anyway, I haven't a thick neck!"

"What if I have!" snorted Ella. "I haven't got a—"

BUT no one ever heard what Ella didn't have. For by that time every woman present—except Sadie Fane, whose pretty blue eyes were wide with joy—was crying to the heavens her opinion of every other woman present! No one could understand what was being said, but everyone was taking a mad, vicious delight in saying all that she could think of in retaliation for things heard previously. Bottle-nose, hook-nose, a thief's nose, a gossip's nose—sharp eyes, mean eyes, silly eyes, weak eyes—wise wrinkles, suspicious wrinkles—cold foreheads, malevolent foreheads, passionate foreheads—foolish mouths, uncouth mouths, hypocritical mouths—all were tossed back and forth at their wrathful owners with all the venom and rancor that wounded, writhing self-esteem can supply; nor would anyone cease, though poor Mrs. Jenkins ran down from the porch and sobbingly begged them not to quarrel, for how can anyone help what kind of a face she is born with, but come into the house and have some ice-cream and cake—the cake she had baked herself—and the ice-cream was all melting!

"No! I wont go into your house. I

doubt if ever I again go into any Oldetown house except my own!" said several violently at once.

"I don't care for ice-cream and cake," shrilled Mrs. Collins. "Thank God I haven't the profile of a glutton, though"—sarcastically—"my poor eyebrows—"

"Thank heaven I haven't the eyebrows of an adventuress!" flung Mrs. Holders, "though my poor nose—"

She was interrupted. All were finally interrupted by a small, quiet man with a suit-case who for three minutes had been trying to attract the attention of one of the crowd. But not even Sadie had noticed him—though few were the men whom Sadie's bright blue eyes didn't see.

He asked very meekly and courteously if some one could tell him where the mayor of Oldetown lived. He had been directed at the depot but could not locate the house.

A perfect orgy of fact-hurling cannot be stayed instantly. And when the bars of discretion are let down, who can tell whether they will ever again be put up? Tense, excited, wild with wrath and hurt vanity and acrid enmity were those women. They hated each other, and they hated all the world. And they saw no reason for excluding a small, quiet man who was bothering them.

"I cannot locate the house," he repeated appealingly.

"Naturally!" said some one (afterward everyone denied that it was she), "with a receding chin that shows a vacuous mind!"

"Who would expect it," snorted another (the majority accused Melinda later, but she bitterly denied it), "with small, gray, gimlet eyes that denote small intelligence! Third house around the corner—though I doubt if you can remember so much."

"I—I think I can," said the small, quiet man, a little breathlessly, his gimlet eyes round with emotion, his small chin rather rigid.

"YEP!" grimly said Jonathan that evening to Melinda. (Neither Mrs. Downs nor Mrs. Jocelyn was at the supper-table. They were confined to their rooms with raging headaches.) "It



By that time every woman present—except Sadie Fane, whose pretty blue eyes were wide with joy—was crying to the heavens her opinion of every other woman present!

was the brewer. But he said, as he took the six o'clock train out of town, that he'd throw his money in his beer-vats before he'd build a college in this town. Said he didn't think it had the right atmosphere for young people."

Melinda looked listlessly at Jonathan. "I don't care,"—dismally but honestly. Death and poverty and cancer are hard to endure, but there is nothing so unendurable as hearing from your wrath-venomous fellow-townspeople just what your long, thin nose, disheveled sandy hair, concave chin and depressed forehead indicate.

Jonathan sighed, rather dismally: "I—I suppose my mug figured out pretty bad," he said slowly, diffidently. "I

didn't hear you say—but I want to tell you, Melinda, that most of my wrinkles are 'caused by poor eyesight, I just learned; so don't be too hard—"

Melinda smiled ruefully: "Dear me, Jonathan, I wish you'd told me a month ago and saved me trying to figure out what they all meant. But—but I wasn't sure of anything, except that your cheekbones show a tendency to—to postpone—"

It seemed that Jonathan could decipher something besides pharmaceutical scrawls. He was puzzled for a second only; then he said decidedly: "Melinda, no cheek bone can tell me what to do. I'll 'phone the Reverend Bloss to-night!"

AFTER a seven-hundred-mile journey up the river and through the wilderness, Copeland stepped into an oasis of civilization and modernity, and looked into the dangerous depths of Angele Farrar's eyes From that instant the end was inevitable.

Copeland's Folly

By Alexander Hull

ILLUSTRATED BY DOUGLAS DUE R

THE great chocolate-brown river writhed its tortuous way through the vivid green of the trackless, tropical forest—the paradox of civilization's outposts. To mankind, potent yet puny, it furnished food and succor in this uncharted world, as well as an unerring escape to safety and the sea. Beyond its banks life was, for the white man, so difficult as to be almost impossible. Only through the river could the wilderness be conquered—yet it was no beneficent stream.

In its every bend lurked destruction: misty, rock-strewn rapids; sinister portages along which stalked the jaguar and the hostile Indian; smooth stretches of water infested with huge brown-and-gray *jacares* and teeming with *piranhas*. The trees and tangled masses of creepers that overhung the water's edge swarmed with the moribundi wasp as well as with the harmless and dazzling parrot, tanager and parakeet; if one landed in this vined web of jungle, he was driven again to the river by the fire-ant and the swarming black biting-fly—and everywhere was the marauding mosquito.

Yet the river was navigable for Farrar with his forty-foot launch as far as Paixao, seven hundred miles from the sea; and Jansen, his Danish engineer, drove daringly through rapids that the Indian, with his clumsy tree-hewn canoe, could not be tempted to try. But Farrar would drive anyone anywhere.

Farrar was manager of the United Mining Company's gold-fields at Paixao. He was a lean, brown, smooth-shaven man, with thick brown hair and eyes

like dark amber in which, when—rarely—he became animated, shone pale, smoky lights. He was perhaps thirty-five years of age. His men knew him for a hard driver; yet they gave him an admiring if grudging obedience. And they feared him. Inscrutable, tireless and efficient, he was; efficiency was expressed in every movement of his lithe frame, in his slender, muscular hands and in his very poise and carriage.

Up at Paixao the heat was not oppressive. Winds swept down inspiritingly from the mountains to the west, and the nights were cool and comparatively insect-free. With careless bounty Nature for once had flung her largess of gold in the pleasantest and healthiest, if not the most accessible, place. Here Farrar drove his dozen white men and five-score natives—a mongrel type, about half Indian and half negro, hideous and lazy—with considerable profit to the United Mining Company.

For the white men there were barracks, rude but seaworthy, as the men expressed it, in the rainy season. The Indians dwelt in the thatched huts of their village near by, surrounded by small clearings devoted to the culture of maize and mandioc.

Farrar himself dwelt in aloof splendor on a rise overlooking the rest of the camp, in a modern bungalow built at a prodigious cost in money and labor—the only house of its kind in an area of many thousands of square miles. It was part of the peculiarity of the man that, careless of the little, comfortable



Like the proverbial moth, Copeland fluttered about the intense flame of her charm. Day after day the men of the party rode off with Farrar on trips of inspection, exploration or hunting, while Copeland elected to spend his time more profitably and more dangerously.

safeguards of civilization as he seemed, he yet lived in this wilderness in a style so weirdly out of place.

When you stepped across the threshold, you walked upon a polished pool of hardwood floor; you confronted amazingly excellent pictures, luxurious and comfortable furniture and—crowning achievement of that incongruous vision—a grand piano in dull ebony, brought there heaven alone knows how! And from before it would rise a slim girl of dark, exotic beauty and indeterminate nationality, clothed as if in a Parisian drawing-room, suave with irreproachable hospitality—Angele, Farrar's wife!

The absolute impossibility of it dazed you—as it did young Dick Copeland, son of one of the Company stockholders, when he came up one summer on a trip of inspection. To Copeland, fresh from college, pink and white and lovely with a sort of sturdy college-boy beauty—or ugliness—and not overly gifted with shrewdness, the prospect of this trip had seemed alluring; and when the chance to make the journey with the inspecting officers had been offered, he had jumped at it.

On the steamer he had proved a distinct acquisition to the party, an adept upon the ukulele which he brought with him, ever ready to gush obligingly into a college song or a musical-comedy hit with a throaty baritone, game for countless cigarettes with the men in the smoking-room, or hospitable glasses, within reason, over the bar.

AFTER a tedious seven hundred-miles up the river, Copeland fervently wished himself at home again. At that stage of disillusionment he stepped into Farrar's wilderness taste of civilization and modernity, and looked into the dangerous depths of Angele's veiled, magnetic eyes. . . . From that instant the end was inevitable. There was a compellingness in Angele's beauty that swayed men whenever she wished it.

In strangeness Angele was easily her husband's counterpart. Life seemed to course through her rather than past her, and to its wine she responded with careless, unmoral intoxication. She was twenty-four years of age. Her presence

in this wilderness seemed inexplicable. To Dick Copeland she appeared a figure clipped from New York's society-pages. Yet this was but the exhilaration of life's lighter wine, when she played hours of Chopin on the piano, which was somewhat out of tune, or sang quaint and dainty songs with an innate artistry that her outward lack of vocal finish could not obscure, or splashed at water-colors crudely executed yet strikingly effective. But there were times, of which Copeland did notreck, when she quaffed life's headier liquors with a Bacchantic abandon, when she raged with the awe-inspiring beauty of a lost angel or hunted, with insatiable cruelty, the jaguar and the puma, sometimes alone and sometimes with her husband.

It was at these times that Farrar liked his exquisite pagan best. For the most part he paid her scant attention, and it was at one of these seasons of neglect that Dick Copeland, who prided himself upon the possession of a temperament so clairvoyant and sympathetic that he readily believed he understood women intuitively, came to her distraction.

Like the proverbial moth he fluttered about the intense flame of her charm. Day after day the men of the party rode off with Farrar on trips of inspection, exploration or hunting, while Copeland elected to spend his time more profitably and more dangerously. Under the spell of her eyes he hung over the piano to praise her unstable technic, sugared over the failing places in her voice and ignorantly enthused upon the strength and delicacy of her water-colors. He did not trouble himself to wonder whether Farrar noticed it or not; possibly Copeland took the masterful taciturnity and obliviousness of the husband for sheer ignorance of the flirtation which under Angele's deft guidance was whirling fast toward the rapids.

Perhaps the tropics were already showing an effect upon Copeland's fair, vulnerable skin. At any rate, he was vastly careless of appearances. Possibly that recklessness explained the attraction he held for Angele, for she was the last woman on earth one would expect to be disoriented by the crass immaturity of

a Dick Copeland. It was a strange perversion—but strange things are not uncommon under the Line.

IF Farrar was not oblivious to what was going on, it was a wonderful piece of acting upon his part. Just how far matters had gone, no one in the camp knew, but everyone suspected that it had been no inconsiderable distance. No one ventured, however, to warn Farrar. Any-one with an ounce of judgment knew that it wouldn't do—that he wasn't that sort of man. Goddard, the head of the inspection party, and young Copeland were staying at the bungalow, and there was little chance to warn Dick, who probably would have ignored the warning under any circumstances. Instead, the men sat around the fire in the barracks of evenings (for it was chilly), and comfortably and detachedly speculated upon the outcome, until Jansen finally pierced their philosophic indifference.

"The boy is taking a big chance," said Osborne. "Farrar's dangerous. If Dick had half an eye, he would see that. I should think Farrar might—" He paused expressively, not caring to specify the end too explicitly.

"Oh, nonsense, Osborne," said Wareham. "Men don't do those things any more. We're becoming a little too civilized; we don't handle our women like that now. Farrar wouldn't."

"I'm merely stating my observation," returned Osborne. "And it tells me that we're not in God's country here—and that we needn't quite expect drawing-room conclusions to this affair. If my intuition is anywhere near correct, I should say that you might expect Farrar to do just exactly what other men wouldn't do, anyhow. But that half-matured boy against Farrar! I wouldn't give a brass farthing for his chances."

"I think you're too—er—hopefully sanguinary," protested Wareham. "Besides, man, Copeland Senior is the big stockholder in the concern. Farrar wouldn't attempt anything too final with an owner's son—would he, Jansen?"

"I think it would not make any difference—that being an owner's son," replied the engineer gravely. "At the same

time, he has not to my knowledge killed any man—and there have been other offences. You would perhaps wish me to tell what I know?"

"We surely would!" said Osborne.

"Very well," assented Jansen. "Mr. Farrar, you understand, is a peculiar man; and not less peculiar is Mrs. Farrar—on the contrary. She is what you call a beautiful pagan. Mr. Farrar is a pagan too; they are both—what is the word you used a moment ago?—ah—unmoral. I know. I have observed. I have been here for eight years, gentlemen. Seven years ago he brought her here—in appearance, a mere child, but in woman's wiles, of the subtlety of Lilith. Two years later there was a man—Bates, by name—that came to install machinery. She struck fire there. He was a strong man too, but what can even a strong man do against this damnable wilderness? One morning they were missing. I believe for six days we did not hear from them. We did not try to find them."

"Not try?" exclaimed Wareham.

"It was as you might say, 'There was no official cognizance taken of the affair,'" explained Jansen. "On the sixth day they returned. Bates sat at the stern of a native canoe with Mrs. Farrar, and in his hand he held an automatic trained upon the two Indians who were paddling—useful, too, it occurred to me, in case of conclusions with Mr. Farrar, whom I do not understand, gentlemen. Sometimes I believe him to be a devil. This Bates was frightened. That I saw. And a frightened man is dangerous—always, gentlemen. You do not know where to have him. He does the fatal thing at the unnecessary moment. But it was not so at this time. The incident was still without official recognition, as it were. Mr. Farrar was extremely courteous. He merely asked if the little trip had been successful, and professed himself pleased to find that Bates knew so well how one must manage the crafty Indian."

"Why did he come back?" inquired Osborne curiously.

"It was of a necessity," stated Jansen imperturbably. "Seven hundred miles in a native canoe? When at any time Mr.

Farrar had but to put the launch in pursuit to overtake them easily? There are the long rapids at Anapo, for instance. You know what they are, gentlemen. The man was mad to attempt the thing in a native canoe. And Mrs. Farrar, who knew it would be impossible—but I do not understand her, either. I am sure that she is a devil—a very beautiful devil. However, it had become plain to this Bates, about the third day, that he had attempted a madness; and although he was greatly frightened, he turned back. Nothing was done. Mr. Farrar was very quiet and polite; he treated it as if it had been a mere pleasure-trip. The other, however, did not trust him. One could not help seeing that."

"I don't see much cause for alarm in that," commented Wareham.

"But when the launch took the party down to the steamer, Mr. Bates did not arrive," stated Jansen quietly. "It was said that he fell overboard upon the way. If so, the *piranhas*—it would be a horrible death. I am glad I did not see it."

There was a moment of pregnant silence. "Do you think—" began Osborne, after the pause, with a touch of self-consciousness.

Jansen shrugged impatiently. "Really, I could not undertake to say," he replied as he rose to leave the room. "I do not believe, however, that you would be justified in saying that my story mentioned any such conclusion. And if you were to insist upon an answer, I would, of course, say no."

"Some one ought to warn the young idiot," suggested Osborne after a long silence. "He's pretty poor stuff, according to my notion; still, one has a certain responsibility, you know."

Wareham agreed. The next morning when they strolled over to the bungalow, however, the time for warning was past. At daybreak Copeland and Angele had summoned Jansen,—this was the report of two Indians who had loaded the launch with a month's provisions at the order of Mrs. Farrar,—and the three had embarked and headed the launch down-stream. The tale of the stolid Indians was susceptible of but one inter-

pretation. The two white men looked at one another with an odd appreciation of the futility of their errand.

"Too late," commented Wareham, grinning uneasily.

Osborne observed that the grin was due purely to nervousness. "Well, good Lord!" he burst out angrily. "I hope the poor fool makes it! I don't trust Farrar. Come along, let's hunt him."

But Farrar showed no knowledge of the departure, and they went on an inspection of a fresh gravel-bar that day, twenty miles back in the hills, and camped overnight. It looked like sheer bravado upon Farrar's part; for of course nothing could overtake the launch. Perhaps, they decided, it was only realization of the futility of pursuit.

NONE of them was prepared for what followed, and upon their arrival at Paixao the next night the fact of Jansen's return with the launch, but without the elopers, took them with stunning bewilderment.

Not one of the men quite succeeded in suppressing his wonder and curiosity, except Farrar himself, who merely greeted the returned engineer with: "Hello, Jansen! You'll find the tools in the shed behind the warehouse. Here's the key."

Jansen caught the flung key and departed with a countenance as inscrutable as Farrar's own. And yet *inscrutable* is hardly the word for Farrar's expression. Rather, one would have said *open*—and sworn that he had nothing to conceal. The men ate dinner hurriedly and with a sense of irritation at the delay that it interposed between their curiosity and its partial satisfaction—at least in the barracks later. Goddard went over on some feigned, trivial errand and voiced a considerable displeasure.

"He's a damn' fool, that boy!" he blurted out. "His father will hold me responsible for him, more or less—and now he's gone. It looks as if it might be permanently, too! Where's Jansen?"

"Working over the launch," said Wareham. "He'll be in directly. I heard Farrar tell him he needn't hurry."

The prediction proved true. "The

little family circle, you see," called Osborne, with a circular gesture of his cigar. "Dying with curiosity, too. Come here and tell us. We feel some responsibility for the boy. What have you done with him?"

"If you will wait until I wash?" suggested Jansen politely.

A few moments later he dropped into a chair before the fire and filled his pipe.

"It is the devil's own business," he remarked gravely. "I made attempt to explain to Mr. Farrar, and he would not hear me, gentlemen. 'Mr. Jansen,' he said with carelessness, 'it is all quite satisfactory. I understand—you need not explain. Just fix that rod to-morrow, if you can. If you can't, put in a new one.'"

"That leaves us as much in the dark as ever," said Goddard. "Start at the beginning, will you, please?"

"The beginning was at four of Thursday morning," said Jansen, "—or a long time before that, just as you prefer. For me, it was as I have indicated. I was in a dream running the rapids below the mouth of Rio Mao, and there was an irregularity in the beat of the engine. I was horribly frightened, gentlemen, but presently it proved to be but that devil's cub of a Copeland—I ask your pardon, gentlemen—beating upon my door. I let him in. It was very chilly. My feet were cold. I wished to return to my bed at once, but he seized my arm. 'Gad, Jansen, swell pajamas you've got there,' he said. A joke, gentlemen, you understand. I do not wear pajamas. And I tried to reach my bed. 'Hold on, old man,' he said, but I think he meant no disrespect. 'Stick on your disguise right off, so we can't tell you're bow-legged, and come out into the misty, moisty morning with me. Angele and I are off hunting down the river.' I did not wish to go. I do not care for hunting-trips, gentlemen. But I am paid to run the launch. I went, although it was very chilly.

"I did not at first suspect them, but presently I noticed that there was much food stored in the lockers, that Mr. Copeland's personal effects were on board, also those of Mrs. Farrar. And

there was no preparation for hunting. After a time Mercedes, the girl who sometimes cooks for Mrs. Farrar, came from the cabin. I had not known she was on board. Then I asked for directions, and where they wished to hunt. And the reply was simply: 'Down the river. We'll tell you when to stop.' I did not like this, gentlemen, but it was no affair of mine. My duty is no more than to navigate the launch, you see.

"Presently, however, I overheard that which told me certainly that it was no hunting-trip, but an elopement. They planned to make the coast and take the first outward-bound steamer for the United States. It was practicable. It would be impossible for anything to overtake them; and in addition they were well supplied with food. Nevertheless, I thought it my duty to protest, gentlemen. For my pains I was permitted to run for the next three hours with a pistol at my head. I do not like firearms. Mrs. Farrar knew that. I perceived that I was in danger, so I did not protest further. Mr. Farrar is fair, and I knew that he would forgive me when he learned that I had been coerced.

"At two o'clock I noticed that the engine was not running well. I was puzzled, knowing that I had gone over it carefully the day before. An examination showed that several bolts had been tampered with and were working loose. And a bent rod, gentlemen, was developing a crack. I stopped after calling attention to this. I regret to say that Mrs. Farrar did not trust me. Mr. Copeland had had a little experience with marine engines, however, and he assured her that it was as I said.

"Gentlemen, I went unsuspectingly to the tool-chest, and it was empty! This was fatal to their plans, of course, and there was an excitement, I assure you.

"It was plain that some one had rifled the tool-chest and tampered with the engine. There was no name mentioned, but all knew, without speaking, that it had been Mr. Farrar. There was much talk in the cabin then, between Mrs. Farrar and the young man, of which I heard merely the conclusion.

"He would be quite capable of it, I assure you," said Mrs. Farrar. "He never

liked you, anyway. And besides, are you—what do you call it?—a quitter?"

"No!" said the young man very earnestly. And presently they ordered me to head for a native village some ten miles back upstream and to run as long as the engine would work. We were within a hundred yards of the village, gentlemen, when the rod cracked—so near. There was much parley with the Indians, and presently Mrs. Farrar, who understood them, had purchased two large canoes. They left Mercedes with me. It was not the part of judgment—it was very, very foolish. I do not believe they will get through alive."

"You let them go?" demanded Wareham.

"If you will please to choose your words more carefully, Mr. Wareham," said Jansen warningly.

"Beg pardon, old man," returned Wareham. "Of course I didn't mean that. You couldn't help yourself. They're free agents."

"What infernal idiocy!" snapped Goddard, angry clear through. "They are slaves to their disgusting passions! How did you get back, Jansen?"

"I loaded the second canoe with food—under protest, gentlemen. They engaged two native paddlers and started. There was nothing I could do. I hired a half-dozen canoes and had the launch towed up."

"Seriously, what sort of a chance have they, Jansen?" asked Goddard.

"As for the river, there are the rapids and the Indians below Anapo, who are dangerous; and there is always the fever. Still, with two native paddlers it is not impossible. Naturally, the food will be very short, but there are fishing-lines, and Mrs. Farrar is an excellent shot. Once they have reached the lower stretches, it will be easy. There are ranches and there are boats."

"Which is all beside the point, anyhow," interrupted Osborne. "All Farrar has to do is put the engine in shape and start after them. They will make thirty miles a day, and he will approximate twenty miles an hour. So—"

"What a damnable mess!" cried Goddard, who seemed to take the affair as a personal affront.

INDEED, he did feel himself, to a measure, involved. His friendship for Copeland Senior, and the fact that he himself had invited the young man to take the trip, caused that feeling. And he had, naturally, an abnormally sensitive view of his relations with others. It was this that prompted him to ask Farrar the next morning for the use of Jansen and the launch for a hunting-trip down the river. He was an obvious chap, though, as his friends had often remarked. Farrar eyed him keenly a moment before he replied courteously:

"I'm awfully sorry, Goddard, but I sent Jansen about forty miles up the river this morning early with the launch. Would a few days later do as well? I may be going down myself at that time. I'm sorry to put you off—but you see how it is? I don't expect Jansen back before Friday."

Goddard was for the moment inclined to believe that Farrar was lying about the launch, but inquiry on his way back to conference at the barracks proved that a mistake. He told the men there.

"By Jove," exclaimed Osborne, "I believe the beggar knew you'd want to run them down, and sent the boat off deliberately! The man's uncanny, you know! He doesn't seem to care a hang—it's not natural!"

But after all, when the launch returned, Goddard did not go down the river. He wasn't asked; he wasn't informed that the boat had come—but the servants met him at dinner with the information that Mr. Farrar had gone down, taking an Indian that constituted his personal bodyguard, and Jansen. Goddard, not relishing the lonely grandeur of the bungalow, elected thereafter to mess with the men at the barracks.

For the next week little was done in the way of inspection. Farrar was gone; and Cairns, the second in authority, had a touch of fever and was really unequal to the task of guiding the party. So for eight interminable days—that would have been voted unendurably dull except for the factitious interest that attached to "quarries fresh and odors strange," the indefinable romance that animates the tropics for men of the temperate zones—they loitered about the camp or

took to canoes and reduced the cayman population of the river.

And then Farrar returned, with Jansen, the Indian boy—and Angele. He was as bland and imperturbable as before. Angele, somewhat the worse physically for her experience, but evidently in the highest of spirits, decided to spend three days in bed recuperating from her "hunting-trip," and she retired before anyone could have speech with her.

Of the four men standing by, not one, although the very vitals of each were being consumed by curiosity and each tongue was quivering with nascent questions, found courage to inquire of Farrar for the missing Copeland.

Osborne admitted that he was overcome with a sense of shame for his inadequacy at the crisis, and voted to waylay Jansen and make him talk. And that was what they did. After all, a conference before taking a definite stand—and if violence had been done, it seemed to each of them that some policy would have to be pursued—would be well. They would have the advantage of the facts, and the moral backing of a predetermined and unanimous decision, before facing Farrar.

"Jansen," said Goddard, "we'll have to rely upon you for information. We may have to take steps—in a private capacity, of course. You will not need to appear in the matter, for we will go to Farrar for a statement before acting, and anything you say will be regarded as confidential."

"It need not be," returned Jansen. "And there is nothing for you to do. There was no violence."

"No?" said Goddard with relief. "He did not act, then? I supposed that—"

"I've told you," put in Osborne, "that you could expect anything from Farrar but what you would expect!"

"There was no violence, gentlemen, and I believe altogether not more than two minutes' conversation. We overtook them the third day down. They had been delayed and had lost one canoe in the rapids, with most of the provisions. These native canoes ship a great deal of water. And one of their Indians had deserted. They were toiling along under a cruel sun—and as we drew near, I

saw that they were very angry with one another. We hailed them and ran alongside.

"Ready to come aboard now, Angele?" asked Mr. Farrar.

"My God, yes!" she replied very earnestly, and came at once.

"How about you, Copeland?" said Mr. Farrar to the young man, who sat in the stern with a pistol in his hand—looking very foolish, for Mr. Farrar was unarmed.

"No!" said Mr. Copeland.

"I don't wish to urge you unduly," said Mr. Farrar, "but that canoe is very inadequate. I see you haven't much food, and—you'd better come with us, Copeland."

"Damn you!" cried the young man. "I wouldn't go to heaven in your company. You 'tend to yourself, and I'll hoe my own row. Get away from here, —you and your wife,—or by the Lord, I'll drill a hole in you!"

"Mr. Farrar hesitated only a moment. Then he said: 'Very well; just as you say.' And we left Copeland there.

"I looked back a moment later, and he sat in the stern of his canoe, with his shoulders bent over and his head in his hands. I think he felt ill; I believe he may have had a touch of fever. I do not know whether he had any quinine or not. I felt very sorry for him."

"It's murder—that's flat," said Wareham.

"It's suicide," corrected Osborne. "He refused to come back, although Farrar asked him—and mighty politely, at that."

"Has he a chance?" asked Goddard gravely.

"No!" exclaimed Jansen. "Not one in a million! And he was ill I am certain. And there was so little food. The Indian will desert at once when he becomes too weak to be on his guard. The young man was perfectly mad, gentlemen! It is a pity. He deliberately punished himself. For Mr. Farrar, what could have been better? It clears him of responsibility—so completely! It is a great pity. I do not believe that the young man meant to do so badly. It is merely that he was young and inexperienced, and that mistakes are so costly."

That aspect of the affair impressed them all. Copeland had gone into the trap upon his own initiative. If his final dismissal of the Farrars—husband and wife—was mere bluff, the bluff had been promptly called and he had no one to thank but himself. Yet none of them felt quite clear of responsibility. Farrar, of his own accord, mentioned the affair once, saying that Copeland had seemed angry about something and he had not been able to persuade him to return—that he could not quite fathom the reason for the young man's anger, and that it was all a beastly mess and he was indeed sorry that it should have occurred to mar an otherwise pleasant trip.

Nothing more could be expected from Farrar; the concessions he had made were downright handsome, thought the men, for they could not rightly charge Farrar with complicity in the tragedy. Farrar had been within his rights from the beginning; there was a question whether an unprejudiced jury would not have acquitted him if he had killed Copeland. But he had done nothing—absolutely nothing. Still, the memory of the tragedy lurked in the atmosphere with a miasmatic influence, and all were glad when the inspection was rushed through and completed within a week.

FARRAR did not accompany the departing officials to Brazos. All the way down they watched for signs of the canoe and Copeland, and when they reached the lower stages of the broad stream, they made many fruitless inquiries. The river or the wilderness had swallowed him. It was a closed chapter. But it made very bitter reading for Copeland Senior, whom they cabled at once on their arrival at Brazos.

Only semi-regular tramp-steamers made Brazos; and so it happened that they had five weeks to wait before getting passage. Before the end of the second week Copeland Senior arrived. At once he put searchers at work, but for four days without result. On the fifth day an Indian brought in a rumor of a white man who had stumbled into a ranch-house thirty miles up the river—from the Matto Grosso, or wilderness—and who now lay there in a great fever.

Goddard and Copeland went up the same afternoon and very nearly had difficulty in recognizing Dick in the emaciated, delirious figure there.

But by some inexplicable wonder it was he. Some potent spark had animated the helpless, will-less thing that lay there; some vital power had conquered the wilderness, the river and disease. They had left their marks on him; he was bruised and torn; he was a mere furnace to furnish fuel and draft for the fever that consumed him—yet he had proven himself. That which came out of the refining fires promised to be true ore. There were weather-beaten, experienced travelers that frankly said the thing was impossible. This pain-wracked, gibbering creature gave them the lie. An untried man, without knowledge of the country, unprepared, without food, alone, he had negotiated seven hundred miles, or thereabout, of river and jungle, and had come out of it alive. It was a feat men would remember, admire and doubt; but one thing was certain: the man who had turned that trick *was* a man. By reason of that experience he had a right to lift up his head and eye any other man squarely and challenging.

His recovery was unexpectedly rapid, however; and before long he was able to hobble about the streets of Brazos with his father or some one of the other officials. He was still a very sick man, nevertheless; and he had lost his pink-and-white college-boy beauty, his illusions and his hankering after other men's wives. The experience had aged him ten years.

One day Dick Copeland suggested the summary dismissal of Farrar from the United Mining Company.

Copeland Senior regarded his son thoughtfully for a moment. "Upon what grounds?" he inquired finally.

The question proved rather a poser for Dick, and he returned the only answer he could find, although it was plain, even to him, that it would scarcely pass muster.

"He's a perfect devil!"

"Why, yes—so he is," agreed Copeland readily, "but a very competent devil. I hardly see that you have any



An untried man, without knowledge of the country, unprepared, without food, alone, he negotiated seven hundred miles, or thereabout, of river and jungle.

reason for complaint, however. The *casus belli* impresses my humble intelligence as being all on his side. He did nothing to you."

"Simply because I gave him no chance," retorted his son. "I was too smart for him."

Copeland pondered this for a moment. "No—I don't think so," he remarked dryly. "Listen to me for a few minutes, Dick: You've been up against a great and terrible experience. It has had an effect upon you that, in the broad way of looking at things, has been beneficial, I believe. You've escaped alive and you may be mighty thankful, for it was an accident.

"The whole business, though, is still too vitally close to you for you to see it in its proper proportions. I don't want you to do or say things now that you'll be sorry for later. There's no need for you to make an ass of yourself. This Farrar is a man—a mighty clever, capable, strong man. This talk of dismissing him is sheer nonsense—a piece of petty spite and a desire for revenge that isn't worthy of a man who has been through what you've been through. The goal you set out for was death—and something has guided you to more abundant life. You have no ground for complaint.

"Farrar has a strangle-hold on all the water-power in that country, and he knows the natives like a book. Our company merely leases the water-power and labor from him. Before he went in there, mining was impossible. He fixed the grafting government, placated the hostile natives, bribed the incompetent and dishonest officials. His holdings in the United Mining Company hold second place to my own. It is doubtful whether he could be ousted from his position; it is certain that he won't be. He's a man-sized man on a man's-sized job."

"He's a tiger!" said Dick, grinning.

"Yes, he's that too," admitted Copeland. "And Angele—she's the only woman I ever saw who was a match for him. And she knows it, and so does he. The idea that a half-baked college-boy like you could come between them—well, if I'd known, I'd have ordered your monument in advance!

"There must be something in you, though, or you'd never have got down this river alone. Of course, if you think you can lick him, and want to try physical conclusions, you're of age. Go to it! But if you don't, don't come to me for help. You won't get any. And for heaven's sake, don't publish it!

"Just now all these men are admiring you for having the luck and ability to get yourself out of a devilishly bad fix. You're all to the good. In a few years more the river will be settled up, and anyone will be able to do what you've done. But now there's a sort of romantic glory attached to the achievement. The men and women stare after you in the street; I've heard your name mentioned over a dozen bars—and always with a little meed of praise thrown in. The best thing you can do is to keep the rest of the affair in the dark. If it gets out, you'll get ridicule instead of praise, and contempt instead of admiration. What do you say?"

There was a certain tenseness about the young man's mouth, a new light in his eyes and a firmer angle to his chin.

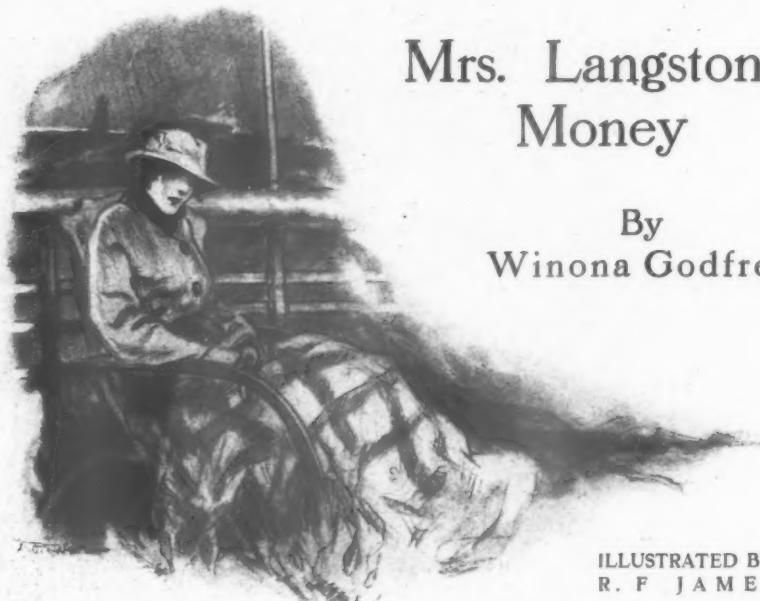
"I see your philosophy, I think," he said. "If you let yourself in for a peck of trouble and it doesn't kill you, you ought to benefit from it—you ought to make yourself benefit from it."

"Exactly."

Dick laughed. "All right," he said at length. "It's a philosophy worth trying, at any rate. Let's go for a walk. I want to see if you were right about the people staring in the streets."

Another story by Alexander Hull will be in the
next issue, on sale February 23rd.

THE story of a couple separated by a far more insuperable barrier than the family feud which separated *Romeo* and *Juliet*—to wit: a million dollars.



Mrs. Langston's Money

By
Winona Godfrey

ILLUSTRATED BY
R. F. JAMES

IT was certainly an odd whim for J. J. Langston to will his millions away from his widow if she remarried. It surprised everybody, because really it wasn't a bit like J. J. His attitude had been far more fond-fatherly than jealous-old-husbandly ever since he bought Julien Browne from her unscrupulous iceberg of a mother—pardon me; things slip so: I mean, of course, that he married Julien and tore her from the reluctant maternal arms.

Not that Julien wasn't willing—she was as pleased as Punch. You couldn't blame the girl. She had been brought up that way—your face is your fortune, my dear, and mind you hold out for the highest bidder. J. J. was only fifty (and a mighty handsome gentleman) and Julien was twenty-two, and not an offer from anybody with over five thousand a year!

So they were married and lived happy ever after. They did, truly. Why not? Julien had everything she had ever wanted—clothes, furs, jewels, cars—and then more jewels, clothes and so forth.

And J. J. had wanted Julien, and he had her—so!

Julien did not pine a bit. When some beauty-worshiper waxed perférvid, she merely cooed: "Uhm! Hadn't we better go back to the others?" And when some blushing young thing spoke shyly of love, Julien lighted a cigarette and thought of fairy-tales. She didn't believe in fairy-tales—that kind.

So when the steering-gear broke and J. J. Langston went the way of all good men, and bad, Julien was terribly sorry. He was one of the few people she was really fond of, and he had always let her do exactly as she pleased.

She was a little surprised when the lawyers read that clause, but not greatly concerned. If you had all the money you wanted, what would you get married for? Oh, yes: she liked well enough to have men dangling around telling her how lovely she was, but she wasn't much more affected by it than a shrine is by incense. She looked human enough, too, and rather a jolly sort. Beautiful? Oh, yes, of course—with a just-about-perfect

five-feet-five-inch body and shining dark hair and rather long gray eyes.

Well, J. J. had been dead a couple of years, and Julien was about twenty-eight, with a probable fifty-year career as a fashion model before her, when destiny thrust into her placid little society comedy a character named Page W. Spencer.

PAGE was a serious young man with a sense of humor, a wonderful—and rare—combination. He was secretary to Mrs. Todd, a middle-aged sociologist who was scandalized by reading about the money young Mrs. Langston spent on clothes. So she sent Page to see if he couldn't persuade Mrs. Langston to forego just one or two of those gowns and give the money to some poor little crippled children Mrs. Todd was interested in.

Without finding it necessary to forego the gowns, Julien sent a generous check for the children, and she asked Page to let her know when Mrs. Todd needed further financial assistance for her protégés.

It wasn't long before young Mr. Spencer was among young Mrs. Langston's most frequent callers. In fact, they became great friends. Everyone considered this odd, of course; but then, the eccentricities excused to genius are as nothing to those excused to money. Page the idealist was an altogether different sort from the men Julien had known all her life. And as for Page, he thought Julien was about the loveliest thing ever made, not barring roses or April dawns or an October moonrise. No, he hadn't any intention of falling in love with her—that would have been quite too absurd for a man with twenty-four hundred a year. *But* a man may surely feast his eyes on an orchid in the florist's window without having any evil intent to smash the glass and steal the flower. Besides, as a psycho-sociological study, Mrs. Langston was most interesting. (Sounds like the same old thing, doesn't it?)

"Why," said Julien one night, "do you always look amused when I say anything about life?"

"Because you don't know anything

about it," smiled the wise young man. "You're just a spectator—the lady in a box-seat."

"What of that?" retorted the lady. "The umpire just looks on, but he sees most of the game, doesn't he?"

"You're more like the lady at the play, though—you see the play, but you don't believe it. The play's very sad, and the poor heroine has a terrible struggle; but probably you saw the star having luncheon at the Claridge that day wearing about a million dollars' worth of sables. So when she says she's scraped and starved, you think: 'Oh, well, it's just a play.' And you're that way about the troubles of the world—you read about them and hear about them, but you don't really believe they're true."

"Oh, you're too absurd," she pouted.

"Do you want an experience?" he asked.

"Well, I don't know. Experience with you always seems to mean something unpleasant."

He laughed. "Not always, by any means, I assure you. Quite the contrary! This wouldn't be anything at all dreadful. It would only be novel to you and—educative."

She shuddered. "Educative! horrible word! But what is it?"

"I wish you'd go down and spend a day with my cousin Rhoda Smith at Blyden."

"What for?"

"Oh, just for fun."

"Would it be fun?"

"I don't know. I want to see how you'd take it—as a comedy or a tragedy."

"Why do you want to know how I'd take it?"

"Oh, just that I'd like to know."

She turned her head to look at him a little curiously. He was looking at her as he usually looked at her—with a compound of conscious admiration, unconscious adoration and humorous appreciation.

"I think I'll go," she said calmly.

TO his surprise and amusement she went—to spend a day at Blyden, that plebeian suburb, with Mrs. Charles Smith. I suppose you've read about the millionaire who goes to inspect the sor-

did misery of some wretch who is scraping along on ten thousand a year? Probably you had about fifteen hundred yourself and didn't think you were so badly off. Well, this was different. Charles Smith was a plumber and made just about fifteen hundred a year. Mrs. Smith did her own work, except the washing. She was a plain, pleasant person who could not have spelled *psychology* off-hand and did not suspect that cousin Page was a sociologist. She knew he had gone to college, and she understood that he had a good job as secretary or something to a rich woman.

She didn't know why this Mrs. Langston was coming; but Page had always been nice to her, and so she was very willing to oblige him by entertaining his friend. Julien had been warned to wear her plainest gown and not to smoke unless she wanted to scandalize Cousin Rhoda completely; nevertheless the latter was rather staggered by her visitor—by her clothes and manners and accent and hair and finger-nails.

"Lord!" she commented to herself, "Wherever did Page meet up with her!"

Mrs. Smith did her best, though—had tomato soup and potatoes *au gratin* extra for dinner, and kept the children as quiet as those young Indians had ever managed to be. Still, it was rather a trying day—not that Julien was the least bit supercilious or patronizing; Mrs. Smith admitted that she was as sweet and friendly as could be; still, it was sort of—trying.

Of course, the point was not Mrs. Smith's feelings: it was Julien's attitude toward this intimate view of how the other half lives. Julien found the day neither a comedy nor a tragedy. She found it merely mildly interesting at times and rather more than mildly boring at others. She thought it really too bad to put Mrs. Smith to all that trouble and uncomfortableness, and she really couldn't see where there was anything educative in the experience for herself. Of course—it did seem amazing that a man like Page Spencer, handsome, well-educated, well-mannered, not by any external to be distinguished from other gentlemen of loftier lineage, should come from Mrs. Smith's class.

Page, bringing candy for the children, came to take Julien home, it having been stipulated that the trip was to be made by train instead of motor. He didn't know exactly how he had wanted Julien to be affected by his "experiment," but he was disappointed that she was apparently not affected at all.

She laughed when she saw this. "What do you want?" she asked. "Why should I be shocked? Your cousin seems comfortable and contented enough."

"There's nothing to be shocked about, of course," said Page. "I merely wanted to call your attention to the difference between the life of a woman like my cousin and your own."

"Yes, but I knew there was a difference before. And what's to be done about it?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing," said Page, vaguely irritated.

"Of course," said Julien, "it's not fair for me to have so much money and her so little—"

"What I wanted you to see was how full and useful and happy such a woman's life is, with none of the luxuries you think so essential," he put in with some vehemence.

"O-oh," Julien drawled, frowning a little. "But don't you see? It isn't the luxuries in themselves; it's that they *are* essential to me and not to her. It's simply a question of what I am used to and she doesn't miss."

Of course, the discussion got them nowhere.

The next time she saw him, he mentioned having taken Miss McBride, a little stenographer he had met, to the theater the night before.

"Why don't you ever take me?" she asked, merely as a question, with no appended pout.

He smiled, and there was rather less of that usual humorous appreciation in the smile. "Would you go as Miss McBride did?"

"Yes."

"Probably you don't realize what that means."

"What does it mean?"

"Street-cars and balcony seats."

She smiled too. "All right."

"You mean you really want to go?"

"Yes."

"Why do you want to?" He regarded her suspiciously, as if she might be up to something.

"Just because I want to. I think it might be—educative."

So they went. She came down in a very simple gown, but he eyed it disapprovingly. "Haven't you something plainer?"

"Heavens, this is perfectly plain!"

"How about that suit you wore to Blyden?"

"Wear it again?"

"Certainly. It looks like rain. And Miss McBride always wears a blue suit."

She shrugged and donned the suit.

The street-car was crowded, and Page clung to a strap. Julien had a seat—between a fat man who wheezed and a little thin woman with a skinned-milk-looking baby who kept his feet in Julien's lap.

At the theater they had what Miss McBride would have considered excellent seats—in the balcony. The play was mildly amusing—and it was raining when they came out.

"I'll get a taxi," said Page.

"Would Miss McBride expect a taxi?" asked Julien.

"No," he grinned.

"Then we won't have one."

He raised his umbrella, and they walked two blocks to a little restaurant where one may sup in a manner and at a price quite dissimilar from the manner and price of Sherry's or the Ritz.

"What will you have?" Page inquired with a complete return to the humorous appreciation.

"What would Miss McBride have?" Julien parried, avoiding a gray thumbprint on the menu.

"Club sandwich and a cup of chocolate," chuckled her escort.

"I shall have a club sandwich and a cup of chocolate," stated Mrs. Langston calmly.

He had the same, and they ate separately.

It was still raining. They squeezed aboard a street-car that smelled like a wet dog, and eventually stood at Mrs. Langston's imposing front door.

"Do you come in?" she inquired before she touched the bell.

"Oh, no. You see, the landlady goes to bed in the parlor at ten-thirty, and you have a little room on the third floor where you can only take your girl friends."

"I see. And—er—do you kiss me good night?"

"Certainly not," stated Mr. Spencer firmly. "You are a self-respecting stenographer making fifteen dollars a week, and—we are only very good friends."

"Oh, yes," agreed Mrs. Langston, nodding her head.

But Mr. Spencer's eyes remained fixed upon her—the little stenographer in a plain blue suit and muddy shoes, little hat awry, hair just a mite disarranged by the wet wind, wonderful eyes looking at him questioningly, teasingly. She pressed the bell.

His umbrella fell to the floor; his longing arms reached out and clasped the little stenographer tight; his longing lips ecstatically pressed hers. . . .

He released her. The door opened, and the imposing figure of William the butler appeared in the aperture.

"Good night," said the little stenographer sweetly, if a little breathlessly.

"Good night," stammered Mr. Spencer, stooping for his umbrella.

William closed the door.

Justine was horrified when she saw her mistress. *Mon Dieu* and *ma foi!* and head of a little cabbage! Madame's feet were wet; Madame's skirt was bedraggled and Madame's *chapeau* awry! And being a French maid, Justine may even have discerned that Madame's lips were kissed!

Madame looked at herself in a mirror and laughed deliciously. And then she looked again—very thoughtfully indeed.

Can the man and woman whose lips have met be again the same serene, unconstrained comrades they were before? They cannot—particularly if the kiss was sweet.

JULIEN waited for Page Spencer to

come again. She thought of that kiss with a half-tender amusement. She wondered how he would look, what he would say, when he saw her again. He did not



REEDAMS

"And—er—do you kiss me good night?" asked Mrs. Langston.

come. Two, three, four, five, six days passed—he did not come. It was very strange. Julien frowned; her foot tapped the floor impatiently. What was the matter with the man?

Then one morning from her car she saw him—in the vicinity of Mrs. Todd's. He came at her gesture. His manner was queer; he did not look her merrily in the eye as had been his habit.

She said: "Aren't you coming to see me any more?"

He said: "Oh, yes—yes, of course. Been very busy—busy—"

She said: "Oh—busy? Perhaps you and Miss McBride—"

He laughed weakly. "Oh, no—nothing like that—"

"Well, then, come soon."

Suddenly he leaned eagerly over the car-door. "To-night?"

She considered. "Ye-es, to-night, if you like. Yes."

Then he gave her one look. In spite of herself her color rose. Idiot! He was thinking of that kiss! Why did he? Why need he? She had been for ignoring it—for being as they were before.

He came—and acted like a man with a cigarette in a powder-factory. Conversation was a lame thing, hobbling about from subject to subject, and then all of a sudden falling right into the very thing it was trying so painstakingly to avoid.

"Julien! I'm not coming here any more. I mustn't come here any more. I've been a fool, a mole—"

"Dear boy! what are you talking about?"

"About you! Julien, *darling* Julien, I love you. I've been loving you all the time, and I thought I wasn't, because I knew I mustn't!"

"Is it so painful to love me?" inquired the beloved softly—which was not at all what she intended to say.

"Painful!" cried the young man bitterly. "It will probably kill me. I hope it does. I haven't thought of a thing but *you* since *that night*." He looked at her adoringly. "Ah, if you were only a little stenographer like that!"

"What would you do?" she breathed.

"I'd marry you! I'd make you love me! I'd carry you off. Julien! if you

were only a little stenographer like that!"

He advanced ardently; and she retreated, laughing a little tremulously.

"Don't be absurd. We were very good friends—do you want to spoil that?"

He threw himself into a chair. "You're right. It is absurd. I mustn't see you again."

"Is that necessary?"

"I suppose so. Now, if I were only the hero in a novel, I could go out and speculate or something and make a few millions by to-morrow—"

"You think it would be plain sailing, then?" she asked coolly. She was hurt.

"Now, don't look like that," he cried. "I could ask you to love me then, couldn't I? I could move heaven and earth to make you love me. It would make things possible, at least. As it is, I couldn't marry you even if you—cared a little. Two hundred a month! You spend that on hats probably."

She looked down at herself in a sort of dismay. The simple little gown she had on had cost about that—and there were slippers and stockings and lingerie! Heavens, lingerie costs a lot! Pearls around her neck and a ruby on her finger—this ravishing Julien was indeed an expensive luxury! What could one do with two hundred dollars a month? Julien paid her chauffeur a hundred.

She looked at this poor man, so young and handsome and ardent. Oh, J. J. had been cruel, unjust, wicked. If J. J. had not made that awful will, she could have put out her hand like a queen and lifted this beautiful youth to her side.

Page looked at her. Her wonderful eyes melted wistfully into his; she swayed a little toward him like a bending lily—her hands reached out. If only J. J.—

Page could not remember J. J. And it was not the little stenographer he clasped now. It was Julien herself—wonderful, fragrant, yielding, adorable Julien.

This time they kissed with all the tragic intensity of *Romeo and Juliet*, of *Hero and Leander*, for they were parted by a far more insuperable barrier than a family feud, or vows and the eternal sea—to wit: a million dollars.

THE next day Mrs. Langston saw no one but Justine. The next, she sailed for Bermuda—not for the purpose of going to Bermuda, but to be away from all her world, to be alone—to think, to think, to *think*.

For the first time in her life Julien felt the need of thought; for the first time she had a problem. For the first time she really *felt*. She was amazed, horrified, tortured—she had not dreamed this wild thing existed in her, had never suspected that she could possess this capacity for passion.

She lay in her deck-chair, a slender, lovely, motionless figure, not fighting that amazing new-born emotion, but examining it, wondering at it, like a child marveling at a flame. She did not know how to deny herself, even if she had wanted to deny herself. She had never concerned herself with anything but getting what she wanted. She wanted Page, wanted him desperately, and she could only have him in the environment of a Cousin Rhoda Smith of Blyden! She might be madly in love, but she was still in her right mind and she absolutely could not put herself into that picture! She reviewed, detail by detail, that day at Mrs. Smith's. She might wish to—she might be wholly convinced that all the world is well lost for love—but it was impossible.

Then suddenly she thought of Miss McBride, the little stenographer she had never seen—*there* was the logical wife for Page Spencer. Miss McBride would fit so nicely into that two hundred a month. How she would delight in a little flat! She could probably cook and wash dishes and sweep and dust and mend and—and—well, Miss McBride was not the sort men had a grand passion for, but she was the sort they married. A sensible wife for a poor young man; she did not expect taxies, and she always had a club sandwich and a cup of chocolate for supper. What was her first name? What—oh, can a person be so wretched and live long!

And to think that J. J. had done this to her! Dear old J. J., always so kind and tender! J. J.—a thought struck her. Maybe J. J. had loved her like this. Startled, her mind flew back.

"Do you love me, little girl?"

"Of course, J. J."—with a gay little kiss on top of the head.

"Lord, Lord, I guess you'll never find out what it is!"

"What what is?"

"Love," J. J. had said, and he had walked off abruptly.

Well, suppose that, would you try to fix it so that—that Miss McBride could not have your own—would you? Oh, you might—in your pain and perplexity you might try—you might *think* you'd try. But would you really, after all? If you loved anyone very much, and you were kind and tolerant and tender, and you thought maybe they'd want something, oh, so much, then you wouldn't make it hard for them—when it wouldn't matter to you any more—just to keep them yours, would you? You wouldn't want them to think they'd been mistaken about your being tender and tolerant. When it came right down to the point of life and death, you wouldn't, would you? You'd say: "I want you to be happy, dear."

Day after day she lay so, rocked by the long swells of a tranquil sea, fanned by its languid breath, eyes closed sometimes, sometimes open like bits of the sea itself—gray, fathomless, mysterious.

And then one bright morning, like one waking from a dream full of strange scenes and vague, far-flung wanderings, she was back in New York. She sent for Page, and he came—thinner, with something almost ascetic new-born in his strong young face. He drew in his breath sharply when he saw her—so lovely—little shadows under her eyes.

"Do you still love me?" she asked gravely.

He did not answer—only looked at her with an eloquence beyond speech.

"Then—if you wish," she said in a low, careful voice, choosing each word with a sort of dreamy deliberation, "I will marry you—now."

"Julien!" The cry caught at her heart and snatched her breath. Then: "No! it's perfect madness! perfect madness. Oh, my dear, don't tempt me. I can't, I mustn't!"

She smiled. "You can. You must. I want you."



"Oh, yes. But,"—he looked at her incredulously,—"my dear lady—pardon me, but have you forgotten the terms of your late husband's will? If you remarry, you lose your fortune!"

Well, well, what would you? A man is but a man, and this one was no longer possessed of any calmness, any logic, any cool prudence.

A few hours later Julien appeared in the office of her attorney.

"My dear Mrs. Langston, this is a pleasure—"

"Mr. Ewing, I have come to inform you of a rather important—decision—on my part."

"Yes?"

"Yes, I am about to—marry."

Mr. Ewing exhibited a lively interest. "Indeed! May I ask the name of the happy man?"

"Mr. Page Spencer."

"Spencer?" Mr. Ewing lifted an eye-

brow. He looked blank for a moment—then remembered gossip whispered to him. "Oh, yes. But,"—he looked at her incredulously,—"my dear lady—pardon me, but have you forgotten the terms of your late husband's will?"

"I have not forgotten them."

"If you remarry, you lose your fortune!"

"I remember the terms perfectly."

"Possibly Mr. Spencer—"

"He has nothing."

The lawyer hardly concealed his conviction that he was confronted by a mad-woman. "My dear Mrs. Langston! Do you realize—I feel that I should not be doing my duty if I did not point out—"

"My dear Mr. Ewing, please spare me any appeals to sanity. My mind is

made up. I have guessed"—her voice thrilled with a hard-held excitement—"that in the event of such a decision on my part, Mr. Langston left some statement—letter—" She broke off.

"Aside from the will itself?" Ewing wheeled thoughtfully in his chair. "You are right. There is such a document—to be opened only *after* your remarriage has taken place."

He thought Mrs. Langston was going to faint, but she did not.

"I was—married—an hour ago." She laid on the table the duly attested marriage-certificate of Julien Langston and Page Williams Spencer.

Ewing gasped. "Well, I'm—ahem! I'm sure Mr. Spencer must be the happiest man in the world! Charles, those J. J. Langston papers."

With a maddening deliberation he selected one sealed document from the rest.

"This document, Mrs. Langston—I beg pardon, Mrs. Spencer—"

"Oh, for heaven's sake, man! read it! read it! Don't you see I'm—*dying*?"

Mr. Ewing cleared his throat. "Codicil. 'In the event of the remarriage of my dearly beloved wife Julien Browne Langston—' There seems to be a letter to you, Mrs. Langston."

She snatched it open.

Julien, my dear, if you are married, it must be because at last you have learned what love is. You have proved that I was wrong in sometimes thinking you incapable of a real emotion. It was cruel, but have I not proved you to yourself? I want you to be happy, dear, and I cannot deprive you of that luxury which is necessary to you—all that was mine is still yours. God bless you!

Julien burst into tears. "Oh, J. J." she sobbed, and Mr. Ewing caught in her broken words a significance beyond the tribute of gratitude, "I was right! I knew you so well—I knew you wouldn't. I knew you wouldn't!"

MR. Ewing drew a long breath and lighted a very black cigar.

"Oh, hum!" he sighed. "Lucky Spencer! Good lord, women are the greatest gamblers in the world! So the little lady had a heart after all—and a head."

NEXT MONTH

James Oliver Curwood begins the story of the pup that was born to *Kazan* and *Gray Wolf*. "*A Son of Kazan*" is Curwood's best novel of the Great Outdoors.

Rupert Hughes enters the most engrossing phase of his brilliant new novel, "*We Can't Have Everything*."

Hallie Erminie Rives continues her engrossing novel, "*The Heart of a Man*," and we find *Harry Sevier* back on the scene of his earlier struggle.

Holworthy Hall the noted specialist in love stories, has written one of his cleverest business romances in "*Not Over Thirty Minutes*."

Cosmo Hamilton well known to Red Book readers for his "*The Sins of the Children*," presents a short story of a man and a woman who met just when each found life too big a problem.

Kennett Harris offers one of the best short stories he ever wrote. Its title is "*The Woman's Place*," and it tells the story of a man who thought he knew where that was.

Ida M. Evans delves into the life of a man who could write songs about love, but had a difficult time impressing his ability on the one woman who counted.

Roland Pertwee author of the famous *Lord Louis Lewis* stories, tells an unusually engaging story under the title of "*The Missing Chair*."

Other noted writers present their best efforts, to the end that the March issue shall be the best we ever issued.

THE RED BOOK IS SETTING THE PACE IN THE MAGAZINE WORLD.

ECHO ALLEN is the daughter of a prominent Southern jurist. Her mother is a cold patrician, and her brother Chisholm a young drunkard. The mother believes that a gentleman is a gentleman, drunk or sober. But Echo has grown out of this old Southern idea.

Fremost among Echo's admirers are Harry Sevier, a brilliant and wealthy young lawyer, and Cameron Craig, one of the new rich, head of the liquor trust and a profligate, and as determined to win Echo as Sevier is. The girl loves Sevier.

Sevier loses the case for a rough sawyer, accused of stealing, whom he knows to be innocent. Echo is amazed and puzzled. Only one person knows what has caused Sevier's failure. Craig, the lawyer's enemy, divines that Sevier's usual eloquence failed because he was drunk.

Craig asks Echo to marry him. She refuses. He tells her of his rival's drinking. She declines to believe it, but later Sevier tells her that it is true. Silently he vows never again to touch liquor.

Craig is more determined to win Echo. He is also determined that Judge Allen, Echo's father, shall hand down a pending decision, in favor of the liquor trust.

A year passes in which Sevier does not try to see Echo. He has gone through the period keeping his resolve and now feels that he may again hope for the girl's love. The year has not brought Craig any nearer to his desires. He demands from Judge Allen that he decide in favor of the liquor interests.

Judge Allen is outraged. Craig gets hold of some of Judge Allen's old letters.

The next day Sevier calls on Echo and is warmly received. He is just telling her of his victory over drink, and of his love for her, when a cry from Judge Allen's library sends Echo running to her father. She finds him collapsed and picks up a photograph of a letter written by himself when Echo was a baby. The letter was addressed to a woman and asks her to elope with him.

That night he has almost decided to commit suicide to get away from the consequences of the one blot on his life, when Echo enters. She learns that somehow the fateful letters have fallen into Craig's hands and that he is holding them over her father with the threat to make them public unless he wins the decision he wants. She wrings a promise from her father that he will not carry out his suicide plan. In the morning she leaves early, ostensibly to visit an aunt, but really to go to Craig and offer to marry him if he will destroy the letters.

A Complete
Résumé of
The Opening
Chapters of
"THE
HEART OF
A MAN"

Sevier receives from Echo a note saying: "Think of me as gently as you can. I can never marry you—never!" At this death-blow to his hopes, he gives up his struggle against the liquor temptation—closes his office and his apartment and makes other arrangements for a prolonged absence. Then he shaves off beard and mustache, dresses in old clothes and otherwise disguises himself—and takes the train for a neighboring city where he is little known. There

Sevier plunges into a drunken debauch. That night, while he is in a state of dementia from drink, he breaks into a certain large house. He finds others before him—two burglars kneeling before a safe.

And now Sevier hears a servant admit a woman and presently hears the woman's voice at the telephone in the next room—the voice of Echo Allen, telling Cameron Craig that she is in his house waiting for him, and that she will marry him if he will give up her father's letters.

Craig comes in and arranges with Echo to have the marriage performed that night. Craig steps into the room where the housebreakers and Sevier are—and one of the burglars shoots him down. Sevier snatches the letters from the open safe and gives them to Echo, who does not recognize him. Then he hurries her out of the house and allows himself to be captured by the police to throw them off her trail. . . .

Craig recovers to an extent, but his mental faculties remain paralyzed by the bullet-wound. Sevier is placed upon trial for the shooting. He is not recognized, and is sentenced to the penitentiary.

Echo seeks distraction by a trip to Europe.

Sevier is placed in a cell with the sawyer whom he had not defended properly. The man is embittered and criminally minded now. And Sevier is as bitter. He believes that Echo recognized him and will not come forward to help him, by quietly getting his pardon from the governor. Echo did not recognize him and is heartbroken over Sevier's continued absence.

After months Echo visits the prison. She sees Sevier in the workshop, but not closely. However, she is convinced he is not the man who fired the shot at Craig. That man was short. She is overwhelmed, because her conscience now tells her that she must intercede for that man, even at the risk of losing her reputation. A few days later Sevier escapes, makes a train and jumps from it forty miles from his mountain shooting-bungalow.



THE novel for which a hundred thousand book-lovers have been waiting.

The Heart Of a Man

By Hallie
Erminie Rives

ILLUSTRATED BY
RICHARD CULTER

Author of "Satan Sanderson," "Hearts
Courageous," etc.

ECHO stood at the gate of Midfields; her gloved hand delaying to close it, her eyes gazing down the featureless street along which yellow window-squares were beginning to spring out. Behind her lay the darkening lawn, with its tumult of leaves under the acacias about the great house with its fluted columns, dim and gray now, in the deepening twilight. About her were only the quiet of the cold evening, the bewildered shadows huddling beneath the shrubs, and the faint snap of frosty tree-branches in the tightening of the first bonds of winter; above were only the windless silence and a wild white moon flying through dusky wreaths of cloud.

But she felt no soothing influence in the hush. Her mind was far away, in another city and State; her thought had entered again the gloomy prison which she had visited with Nancy Langham and Malcolm—on a day when a prisoner had

intervened to save the Warden's life. The peace of autumn evenings brought no comfort to that place, unless it were the mere rest of wearied bodies. Outside of those walls, folk were eager and merry; inside, lights were dim, life itself sluggish and inept; there were sore hearts, smoldering hatreds, an oligarchy of despotism ruling a community of apathy and despair.

Since her return from the Langhams she had moved, so it seemed to her, in a kind of somber dream in which her daily duties were mechanical and involuntary and her only real life was that inner consciousness which had writhed and struggled unceasingly. What should she—what was she bound to—do? Which way should she turn? There was Mason's opinion, based upon a long and sensitive intercourse, that the man was no criminal: that had he been absolved of attempted murder he could have cleared himself of the baleful association. But

that, after all, was only Mason's opinion. He might be wrong. Was she called upon, on such an empty hypothesis, to take upon herself a horrible mantle of notoriety? So she had reasoned—but!

As she stood by the gate in the dusk, she shivered as though the still cold penetrated beneath her furs. She must tell the truth! Whatever the result, she must disclose the part she had played. She had no thought that this might be accomplished without publicity, or that testimony which might be basis for executive action could be secret. In imagination she pictured herself standing before the same tribunal by which an innocent man had been condemned, telling her story to the impartial and impersonal law—telling it openly, before all the world!

The world? It was not that which was largest in her thought at this moment of harrowing decision. She was thinking now only of Harry Sevier. She wanted him, and him only, desired him with all the strength of her woman's love, which had been sharpened and deepened by the experiences through which she had been passing. When he returned, it would be to find her the center of an open scandal, sprung to new and sensational life—the "mysterious woman" who had been blazoned in a hundred headlines! Would it not kill any vestige of love his heart might still hold for her?

And yet beneath her dread and apprehension there had come to her in her struggle the awakening of something as deep and imperative as her love—the insistent "Thou shalt!"—the nascent *must* of truth and honor, fruit of generations of clean ancestry, which brought clearer vision and resolve.

She turned from the gate at length, her step dragging as if from weariness.

AS she neared the house, there came from the placid street the raucous *honk* of a motor and the sound of masculine voices lifted in a song whose refrain solicitously inquired as to the whereabouts of a certain dog named Rover. The chording was somewhat uncertain, but any lack was more than made up by laughter and noise. She recognized the baritone as that of her brother Chisholm.

Chilly jumped down at the gate, and as the automobile turned and sped back, its occupants calling jovial good-bys, he ran after her up the drive. Overtaking her, he leaned to kiss her cheek, and she caught a familiar odor upon his breath. She turned her face aside.

He noted this with a little laugh. "Come, prunes and prisms," he said, "out with it! Yes, I've had a drink—numerous ones, in fact. Now on with the lecture; let joy be unconfined!"

"When did I ever lecture you, Chilly?" Echo answered dully.

"You *have* been pretty decent; that's a fact, Echo," he responded with humorous lugubriousness. "I wish Father took after you more!"

They had reached the porch now, and he stole a quick glance through the window. "I discern the shadow of my doting parent aforesaid," he remarked flipantly, "and having a due regard for the proprieties,—and peace,—I think I'll slip in the side-door and give the prodigal a wash-up and a clove before he enters the lion's den."

He nodded laughingly and left her to enter the front door alone.

A few minutes later, divested of coat and furs, she came into the drawing-room where her father and mother sat, the former with his magazine and the latter perusing the evening paper. Mrs. Allen withdrew her lorgnette and looked up.

"By the way, Echo," she said, "here's the closing chapter of the adventure you and Nancy had at the jail." She turned the page and read aloud:

"It became known to-day that a dangerous criminal escaped day before yesterday and got clean away from the penitentiary of our sister State. The prisoner, who was serving a term of twenty years for burglary, a few months since, shot down Mr. Cameron Craig, the well-known financier, in his library at midnight. It is to be hoped that there will be a close examination into what appears to be a glaring exhibition of lax methods and unpardonable carelessness on the part of the prison authorities."

Echo could not have had a deeper sensation of amazement and relief. A wave of excitement had passed over her, leaving her cool and self-possessed, and able

to take a natural part in the conversation that followed. But in her heart she was saying over and over:

"I am safe—safe! There is no question now of my telling! The secret is mine—mine—mine!"



As she stood by the gate, she shivered as though the cold penetrated her furs. She must tell the truth! Whatever the result, she must disclose the part she had played.

CHAPTER XXXV

SANCTUARY

IN his little cabin, close by a big log-walled bungalow on a lonely slope of the Blue Ridge, now snugly frozen in by

its winter snows, old "Jubilee Jim" lay in a deep sleep. The moonlight, paling before the coming dawn, came through the single window, lighting dimly the seamed black face on the pallet, the sacks of flour and beans in the corner, a side of bacon hung against the wall and strings of dried red-peppers and bunches of herbs suspended from the rafters. On the floor before the fireplace, in which a few red embers still glowed, snored a yellow hound, gaunt and long of limb.

There was no other house within miles of the place, but solitariness was a habit with Jubilee Jim, and he did not miss human companionship. Ten years before, the man who had chosen that wild spot had built the bungalow for occasional summer outings with his chosen comrades, had ensconced the old negro there as general cook and caretaker. He had built himself a tight little cabin close at hand and remained there year in and year out to guard the building against the frequent forest-fires. In his pottering negro way he was a Jack of many trades, in the summer cultivating a little cleared patch of "garden truck" back of his cabin, in winter trapping small game and of evenings poring over his Bible, spelling out the words laboriously—an accomplishment he had learned many years before from some country "missioner." Three or four times a year, leaving the lean hound in possession, he trudged ten miles to the nearest village for what supplies he needed. But on these occasions he felt no temptation to remain with

his kind, trudging back contentedly to his little cabin, his hound and his Bible.

Suddenly, in the tense, frozen silence, the great hound stirred and lifted his head with a low, guttural growl. His

master woke and turned on the creaking couch.

"He-e-sh!" he said impatiently. "Whaffoh yo' want ter mek dat noise en steal mah sleep!"

At the remonstrance the lean tail thumped the board floor, but another louder growl, deep and menacing, came from the shaggy throat. The old negro lifted himself and listened.

"Sumpin out dar!" muttered Jubilee Jim, straining his ears, for now he caught the sound that had pricked the acuter hearing of the animal—a curious, struggling sound like something wallowing in heavy snowdrifts.

"Sumpen big!" Jubilee Jim's wrinkled face looked puzzled in the moonlight, and his eyes rolled to the wall where, on two wooden pegs, hung an old-fashioned shotgun. "Don' reck'n et's er b'ar!" he whispered to the hound. "Aint been no b'ar eroun' hyuh en mawn thuhty yeahs!" He got up and set his ear to the crack of the door. As he bent his stooped frame, something lunged against the wall outside, and at the sound the hound's bristles rose, and it sent forth a fierce, rumbling bay that rattled the window.

"Et's er man!" said Jubilee Jim. He turned hastily to the rough-hewn table and lighted a lantern; then snapping a chain into the dog's collar and tethering him to the wall, he went to the door and lifted its heavy bar. It opened inward, and there half stumbled, half fell across the threshold a snowy figure that collapsed at his feet.

"Mah Lawd!" ejaculated the old man. "What he doin' hyuh?"

With a sharp word to the leaping,raging hound, he dragged the recumbent body inside, shut the door and lighted a bundle of pine-knots in the fireplace. In the bright yellow light that flooded the cabin he knelt down and examined the man who lay there. He drew off the frosty fur cap from the close-clipped head. The coat was stiff with frost, so that he had trouble to unbutton and remove it, and the shoes were broken. He took a knife and carefully cut them off from the feet, noticing with quick pity that one ankle was swollen to twice its natural size.

"Reck'n yo' mos' froze ter def!" said

Jubilee Jim. "En starved too!" He rummaged on a shelf, found an iron skillet containing some broth and set it close to the blazing wood. Then he drew the limp figure upon his own couch and began to remove the clothing, now wet and clinging.

As he opened the shirt, however, he started back with an exclamation.

Well he knew what that jacket with its black and yellow-gray stripes meant! Had he not often seen the sullen chain-gang breaking stone on the mountain roads? The man who lay before him was a convict in desperate flight in stolen garments! He could tie him fast, unconscious and helpless as he was, and leave the dog to guard him, while he went down to the town for officers. But as he thought, something else came to his mind. "Sick, en in prison, en ye visited me!" he muttered. "De Good Man, he say dat. Dis hyuh man done been in prison, en he mighty sick too. What dee Good Man do, Ah wondah? Reck'n he ain' gwine lock him up, not d'reckly, nohow!"

He saw a crimson stain that spread over the stripes. He touched it—it was blood.

Five minutes later, in the warming cabin, he was examining an opened wound in the shoulder of the insensible man. He washed it carefully and bound it up with some of the medicinal herbs that hung from the rafters. This done, he took the skillet from the fireplace and with a spoon forced a little of the hot liquid, drop by drop, between the clenched teeth. Under these ministrations a semblance of life began to return to the exhausted frame, and with it the chilled body rushed into a fever. The head began to roll from side to side, and the lips to mutter indistinguishably.

The hound had grown quiet now, and released from the chain, came to sniff at the bunk. All at once it flung up its great head with a low howl; then, crouching, it licked the nerveless hand that hung down.

Jubilee Jim looked in startled amazement; then he seized the lantern and held it close. "Who dis hyuh?" he said.

As if at the challenge, the eyes in the white face opened, and for a single instant consciousness flickered there.

"Jube," said a weak voice, "you—old—scoundrel—" Then the eyes closed, and the mutterings recommenced.

The lantern rattled on the floor as the old negro fell upon his knees by the pallet. "Et's him!" he cried. "Dee Lawd he'p! Et's Marse Harry hese'f!" He leaned and looked, with a painful bewilderment, at the striped garments, the smooth, clipped scalp. "Huccome he got dem clo's on?" he said to himself half-fearfully. He stood a moment looking from them to the pallet; then hastily he rolled the sodden things into a bundle and thrust it out of sight behind one of the sacks on the floor.

ATE the next afternoon the smoke from the chimney of the big bungalow rose in a pale spiral into the windless air. Inside, a bright fire of chestnut wood burned on the huge hearth, and Harry lay on a comfortable, blanket-covered couch in the corner. All day long Jubilee Jim had watched beside him as he tossed in delirium, now and then touching the hot hand, laying cooling cloths on the fevered wound or feeding him with a spoon. He had not dared go down the mountain to fetch a doctor, fearing to leave his patient so long alone.

All day, as he watched, Jubilee Jim's slow brain had been busy with the strangeness of that arrival—most of all, with the mystery of the striped clothes. To his simple intelligence, unvexed by the complexities of life in communities, evil and good stood out in sharp and irreconcilable contradistinction, and the garments were a harrowing symbol. But deep in him was that profound, unreasoning belief—the South's touching legacy of ante-bellum days—that trust and confidence that is doglike and unswerving.

Toward evening, when the sick man became easier and lay more quietly, though his fever still ran high, Jubilee Jim opened the door and stood looking out onto the lone, frosty hillside, where the pines stood in somber clusters outlined against the deep saffron glow of the setting sun, like sentinels above the twilight of the snowy valley. At length he knelt down, and with gnarled hands clasped and eyes still on the colorful sky, he said :

"O Lawd, Ah don' know what mek Marse Harry come hyuh lak dis. But yo' knows what he done fo' ol' Jube. Keep him yeahs en yeahs, feed him, en when he so sick he gwine die, tek en git er doctah en cure him up. When ah so old ah ain' no good no mo', he gimme dee lan' up hyuh fo' tuh live on. Don' do nuth'n cep'n watch dee house, en when he come sometimes Ah cooks fo' him—das all! Ah don' know whaffoh he have on dem wicked clo's—don' keer nuth'n er bout dat. Kase, Lawd, Marse Harry ain' been fo' tuh do nuth'n *bad*. Dey tek yo' darlin' Son, dee Book says, en put er crown o' tho'n on He beautiful haid, en He ain' done nuth'n 'tall cep'n good. Ah don' keer what Marse Harry have on; Ah reck'n when he come lak dis, Yo' gwine he'p me he'p him—kase das what he done fo' me!"

As the earnest voice ceased, another spoke behind him: "Jube!"

The old man rose hastily and came to the couch. "Yo' knows me ergen, Marse Harry?"

"Yes, Jube. When—did I get here?"

"Dis mawnin', suh, befo' sun-up."

"Was anyone else here?"

"No, Marse. Ain' been nobody up hyuh sence dee fust snowfall."

Harry was silent a moment, his eyes fixed on the black, affectionate face. "Jube,—bring me the things I—had on."

The other crossed the room and came back with a suit which he laid on the blanket.

Harry shook his head feebly. "Not those. The—others."

Jubilee Jim hesitated—then turned and left the room. When he came back, the striped garments were in his hands.

"Do you—know what—those are?"

The faithful old face turned a little away. "Ah reck'n dem ar some new-fangled fishin'-clo's," he said after a pause.

A faint flicker of a smile touched the sick man's face. He understood. "Put them—into—the fire."

Harry watched him as he obeyed. He was very weak, and his blood, poisoned from the opened wound, was throbbing with fever. He was preserving consciousness only by a great effort, but his gaze held Jubilee Jim's steadily.



A few minutes later, divested of coat and furs, Echo came into the drawing-room where her father and mother sat, the

"By the way, Echo," she said, "here's the chis



former with his magazine and the latter perusing the evening paper. Mrs. Allen withdrew her lorgnette and looked up.
chapter of the adventure you and Nancy had at the jail."

"Jube, I want—no one to—know when I—came, or that I—am here—at all. . . . *No one!* . . . Do you—understand?"

"Yas suh."

"I'm going—to be—sick. But—no matter—how sick I—am—no one is to—be brought here—not a doctor—nor—anyone." Harry's strength was failing now, and the words trailed into indistinctness.

"Yas, Marse Harry."

"I—trust you. . . . Jube!"

That was all. He was gone again into the fevered delirium.

All that night, and for many days and nights thereafter, old Jubilee Jim, faithful to his word, struggled with death over the body of Harry Sevier.

CHAPTER XXXVI

JUBILEE JIM'S JOURNEY

HARRY stood in the doorway of the Bungalow, one hand shading his eyes, looking down the twisting trail to where, far below, a dark blotch toiled up the slope. During three days he had been alone, for Jubilee Jim had gone upon a journey to the city where lay the old life from which Harry had fled on the day he had ceased to be himself. The snows were gone, and an early spring day of azure and gold lay over the satiny stillness of the folded hills. The fresh, pleasant air was full of the smell of new bark and bursting buds; the slender birches were unfurling the virginial green of their young leaves; and here and there on the hillsides, blossoms were showing. All nature was fulfilling its annual mission of rebirth, audaciously triumphing over autumn's death and winter's sepulture.

The stalwart figure standing on the threshold was good to see. The fever that had followed that terrible night of physical exhaustion had been worsted at last by Jubilee Jim's homely medications and the balm of peace and sleep. There had been days when Harry had been perilously near the Great Adventure, but assiduous nursing and a splendid native constitution had in the end conquered. The pure air of the bal-

sam forest and the comfort of the solitude had at length had their way with him. The flesh had come back to the wasted frame, the old brightness to the eye, and the flush of perfect health to the skin. Now, with his curling hair and his crisp dark beard, trimmed as of old, he was again the Harry Sevier of a year before—save that back of the eyes was a steady something, a deep, conscious strength that had come to him from those bitter prison months when his soul had been tried in a fiery furnace of pain.

Harry dropped his hand with a long sigh of relief, for at a turn in the path the dark blotch had resolved itself into the figure of a man, followed by a great dog harnessed to a little cart. "It's Jube!" he said aloud. "He's made the trip safely, and he's got the things!"

This journey had been the outcome of much thought on Harry's part. Lying there in the long weeks of convalescence, his mind had been busy with the problem of the future. What to do? He could not stay forever there on the mountain, a lonely hermit. Somewhere he must take up life again. When he had beguiled those dark prison moods with thoughts of freedom, his imagination had pictured flight to some distant country where, under a borrowed name, he might find a refuge, barren as that refuge might be of all life's sweetness. Freedom now was his. Should he put the past forever behind him, make his disappearance good and without more ado drop out of sight and sound forever? All his instinct rebelled against this drastic solution, this cavalier denial of life and its mental exercise, for a career of empty futility.

What remained, then? To go back to the life he had left behind him on the day he ceased to be Harry Sevier?

Why not? He was free—free to be himself again. Only one, besides Echo, had known that he and the captured housebreaker were identical—that was Craig. And Craig had been taken from his path. And who else would connect Harry Sevier, the lawyer, the club-man of well-known and reputable past, the favorite of drawing-rooms—who could ever associate him with a tawdry bur-

glar and desperate convict who had escaped from a penitentiary in another State? Once more bearded and eyeglassed, without scar or mark to point resemblance or beckon identification, recognition would be the wildest improbability.

Once, as he grew better, Jubilee Jim had gone to the valley below to return with a bundle of back copies of the county newspaper, and as Harry pored over these avidly, the old life had cried to him from every line. The movement that had been called into life by the Civic Club, in the hour when he had made the first speech of his life that had been untinctured with any personal ambition or selfish motive, had gained momentum; it had taken on party organization and would be a force to be reckoned with in the coming campaign. On that day he had had his first taste of the joy of battle for a principle, and he longed inexpressibly to throw the power of which he was now more than ever conscious into the struggle for the new ideal.

Suppose he went back, and Craig recovered the mind that was now in eclipse—recovered and remembered? What then?

His safety lay in the fact that no one possessed the clue to the unthinkable reality. Craig, if he recovered, would possess this, and if he in his right senses denounced him, the accusation, spectacular and incredible as it might seem, would have to be seriously met. And he could not meet it, for it would be true! So long as Craig lived, the harrowing danger would always be there—a veritable sword of Damocles! Would not his future be forever a dubious adventure, haunted always by a torturing shadow and the dread of discovery and shame? In fancy he saw himself seized—to be suddenly confronted with that shameful thing, to face a cloud of witnesses, be dragged back to a cell, despised and broken, once more a convict—that, or else flight, cringing and furtive, with the hounds of the law in cry!

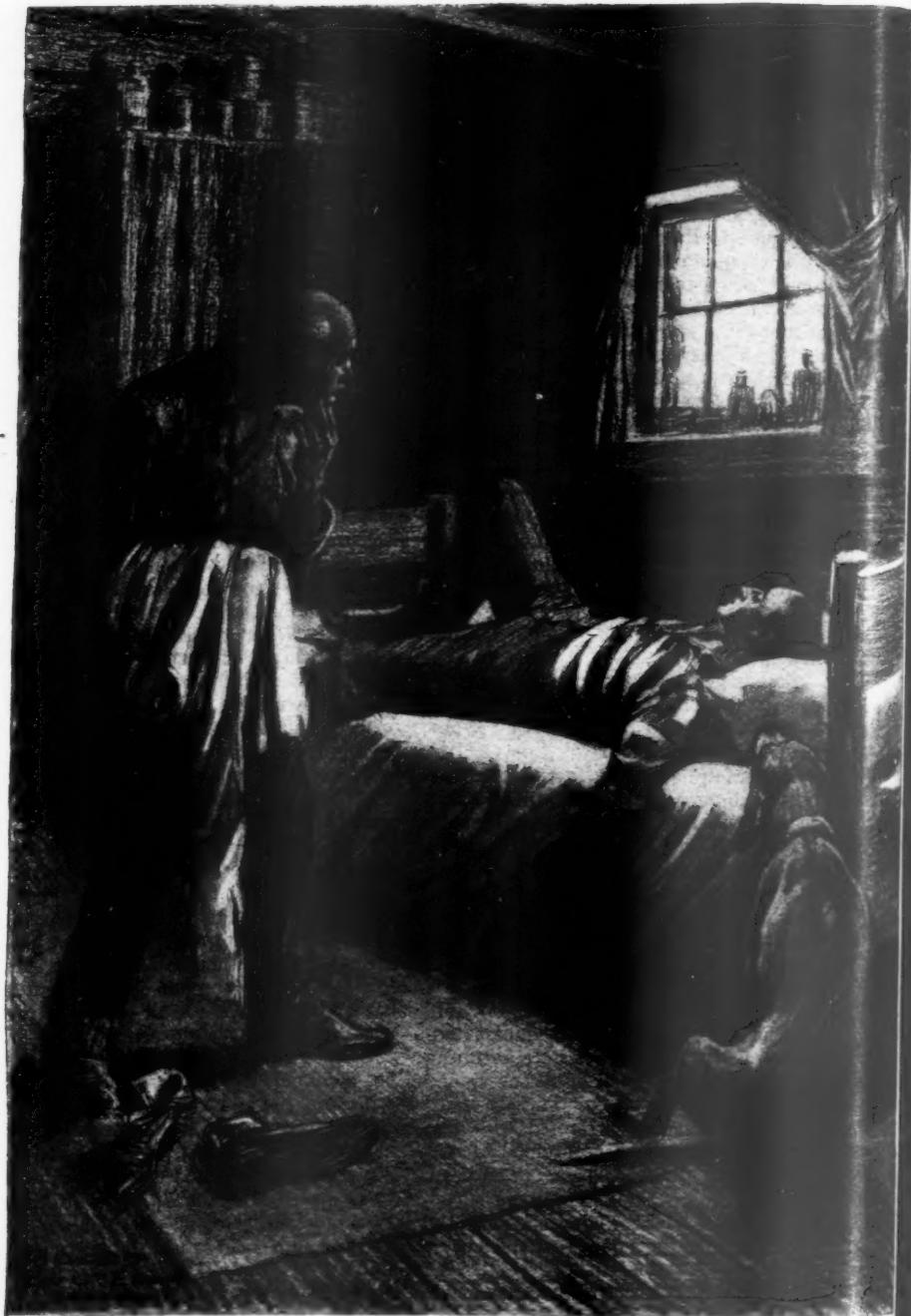
And yet, did not the chances that Craig would not regain his faculties vastly preponderate? The newspapers

Harry had read had not contained the item chronicling Craig's journey to Buda-Pesth, and recovery was not an imminent possibility to his mind. A year had gone by, and all the skill that wealth could invoke had no doubt been applied, and vainly. Even if some time Craig partly recovered, it was more than likely that his memory of that fatal night in his library would be impaired. So Harry told himself.

Over and over he followed the trail of painful reflection, in a vicious circle that centered always in the one thought that sent his mind shrinking in upon itself—Echo. What would that old life be to him, denied its old relations? He and she were nothing to one another any more: she was only a stinging memory. And he would see her, meet her, talk with her, always with that sickening pretense of ignorance between them, in a painful hypocrisy, till she should love and marry—some one else! A wave of sick revolt had surged over him at the thought. What to him was freedom, even life itself, if each hour held the thumbscrew and the rack?

Thus his resolve had swung back and forth, pendulumlike, tiring itself with the endless question, and much thinking had brought him no nearer a solution. Meanwhile time had been passing, and pending final decision it was necessary for him in some measure to pick up the old threads. There were responsibilities which he had not yet laid down. There were his apartment, his servants, his office—for though provision of a sort had fortunately been made for a time, his affairs must now be put upon a securer basis which would permit of his taking whatever course should seem best.

So finally Sevier had sent Jubilee Jim on the long journey, after thoroughly schooling the old man on the part he was to play. By him he had sent a letter to his man of business, with minute instructions which would enable his affairs to be put in order, another to his bank directing the sale of certain securities for cash to be held at his instant demand, and a third to his Japanese valet Suzuki, instructing him to send clothes, his private papers, a few books and other needful articles—for solace in this sol-



The hound had grown quiet now, and released from the chain, came to sniff at the bunk. All at once it flung up its great head with a low howl; then, crouching, it licked the nerveless hand that hung down.

itude until he should have determined what to do.

"**G**OOD, Jube!" said Harry as the old negro came into the room carrying the big bundle from his little cart. "You got everything, then?"

"Yas, Marse Harry. Ah brung dem all—dee papers, en dee close, en dee money fum dee bank, en all. Moughy glad ah got dis yer ol' dawg erlong, wid sech er heap o' money on me! Reck'n Ah spent er lot—had tuh pay er quahtah bof ways fo' him tuh ride on dee baggage-cyah: wouldn' let him in dee smokah nohow. Dey argyfied he too big."

Harry spread out the clothing on the table—suits of fashionable cut, speaking loudly and insistently of the old life. Those he wore at the moment had once been modish too, but their one-time owner would no longer have recognized them, for they were threadbare and as battered as the homemade moccasins on Harry's feet. At the first opportunity he purposed anonymously to send John Stark double their value, with certain articles the garments had contained—watch, cigarette-case, cuff-links and what-not—now wrapped in a little package in a safe hiding place.

Harry turned. "Well, Jube, tell me all about it. When you got off the train, where did you go first?"

"To dee bank fust. Man dah was moughly sp'rised tuh git yo' lettah. 'Reck'n Mistah Sevier gwine tuh Africy or somewhah,' he say."

"Where did you go next?"

"To Marse Dick Brent's office—whah dey maks dee newspapahs. Foun' him settin' dah wid er pipe in he mouf, lookin' jes ez nachul ez life, same ez when he up hyuh wid yo'-all dat time. Ah cert'n'y glad tuh see Marse Brent, en he ax pow'ful lot o' questions 'bout yo'. 'Mah lan!' he say. 'Tuh think he up in dat ol' mount'n all dis God's-blessed time, loafin' eroun' en gittin' fat ez er buzzard, when we-all is wo'kin' ouah souls tuh deff, en politics gittin' red hot. Whaffoh he do dat? When he come up dar, Jube?' 'Well,' Ah says, 'Ah ain' got no haid fo' geogerfy, Marse Brent, but Ah reck'n et mus' of been las'

fall some time. En den Marse Harry been moughy sick in dee fall en wintah.'

"Sick!" he say. "Yo' ol' rascal, yo' ain' got no mo' sense dan er snake have hips! Why yo' don' sen' no word home erbout it?" "Marse Harry he say not tuh," I say. "Clare he ain' gwine be no trubbil tuh nobody. So Ah doctahs him en nusses him, en aftah while he git all right ergen. On'y he so fon' o' dee ol' bungalow he jes' cain' bear tuh leave et." "Sho!" he say. "When Ah thinks o' dis 'hyuh wuk, Ah reck'n Ah don' blame him none." Den he tek me down tuh yo' place fo' dee clo's en things—walkin' erlong wid me jes' lak Ah been yo'se'f. "Moughy lot er folkses sorry yo' Marse Harry ain' erbout no mo', Jube," he say. "Speakin' o' dat," he say, "dah's one o' dem ar' folkses, Ah reck'n, comin' down dee street dis minute!" Ah looks up en Ah sees er moughy pretty young lady, tall en white lak er big lily. 'Dat Miss Echo Allen,' he say."

Harry turned away abruptly and looked out of the open doorway.

"Marse Brent, he tek off he hat, en he say: 'Miss Echo, what yo' reck'n dee las' spectaculous news is? Harry Sevier been up at ol' Blue Mount'n all dis yeah!' Well, suh, seems lak dat lady so sp'rised she mos' faint right on dee spot. Den dee colah come back in huh cheeks, en she laugh—moughy haphified laugh; but somehow et got er little cry en it too, somewhah. She look at me, en huh eyes jes' de colah o' er cat-buhd's aig. 'Dis yer Jubilee Jim Sandahs,' Marse Brent say, 'whut cook fo' Sevier's outfit up dah, en he also er numbah-one nuss, kase dee young loafah been sick. Bet yo' been ovah-feedin' him, Jube.' Miss Echo she walk down dee street wid we-all, cl'ar tuh yo' house. Ax how yo' is now, how yo' look, is yo' thinnah—fifty hundud things she ax erbout. Ole Jube he sho' reck'n dat lady think er pow'ful sight o' yo', Marse Harry!"

Harry choked back an exclamation of misery. Every word had been like a hot needle thrust into a quivering nerve. Her face, with its ivory clearness, under its wonderful whorl of red-gold hair—her eyes deep as sky-mirror-

DAMAGES

A romance in
a boarding-house



Why didn't she finish her breakfast, huddle outdoors and get some red blood in her? If she kept on toying with food like that, she wouldn't last another winter.

GOOD morning, Miss Cottrell."

"Good morning, Mr. Smithson."

So Smithson had greeted her every day for eight months as he seated himself opposite her for breakfast at Mrs. Wainwright's boarding-house.

"Good evening, Miss Cottrell."

"Good evening, Mr. Smithson."

So they met at dinner. Then Smithson spread before him the morning paper or the evening paper, as the case might be, turned to the sporting page and forgot that she existed. She, for her part, did not need even the help of a newspaper to banish him from her thoughts. She could sit squarely in front of one man or twenty men and give a distinct, definite impression that she was no more aware of their presence than as if they were the mere figments

of some disordered imagination.

In the present instance, however, she did more: she succeeded in conveying this impression to Smithson in face of the fact that she had conceived a positive dislike of him. It was a sufficient index to his character that his interest in the paper was confined in the fall to the accounts of football-games, to prize-fights and bowling in the winter, and in the spring to baseball-games. Moreover he smoked cigarettes—even going as far as to select one before leaving the dining-room. At night their odor sometimes penetrated to her room on the opposite side of the hall, and though once or twice she had thrown open the hall window with a rattle that must have made it perfectly obvious to him that her frank design was

to clear the air, this apparently had no effect whatever. He continued to jeopardize his health and pollute the atmosphere with quite manifest satisfaction.

With Mr. Smithson's health Miss Cottrell was of course not in the slightest concerned,—as a matter of fact, no one need have been concerned about it, for he looked as hardy and robust as a college athlete,—but her own was a constant source of worry. This was due not so much to the fact that she was ever ill as that she had nothing else especially to worry about. She devoted a half-hour morning and night to calisthenics, slept with her windows wide open all through the winter and confined herself to a rigid diet which deprived her of the pleasure of many of Mrs. Wainwright's finest dishes. . . .

"Good morning, Miss Cottrell."

By Frederick Orin Bartlett

Author of
"The Wall Street Girl."

"Good morning, Mr. Smithson."

It was a Saturday morning in June—a fair and sparkling morning which should have turned a man's thoughts to finer things than the probable batting order of the afternoon baseball-game scheduled for Ebbet Field. And yet it was to this and nothing else that Smithson turned. He ate his cereal mechanically with his eyes glued upon the page—ate it mechanically and without chewing it.

Miss Cottrell, who was allowing at least thirty chews for each spoonful, watched him in disgust, although her thoughts were apparently engaged upon much less mundane matters. Her clear brown eyes were leveled several feet over his head, and yet she saw.

Further, she saw him devour his entire egg in five mouthfuls and swallow a cup of steaming-hot coffee in a half-dozen gulps and follow that by reaching for his cigarettes. She felt like bidding him farewell. He was out of the room before she had finished her oatmeal.

What she did not see was that as he paused at the door to light his cigarette, —no farther outside the door than was necessary to cover the strict conventions, —he for a second watched her still dabbling with her cereal, and smiled a sort of contemptuous smile. Why didn't she finish her breakfast, hustle outdoors and get some red blood in her? If she kept on toying with food like that, she wouldn't last another winter. It was none of his business, but she was starving herself. This morning she did not look as though she had the strength to get



Miss Cottrell, who was allowing at least thirty chews for each spoonful, felt like bidding him farewell.

ILLUSTRATED BY J. J. GOULD

downtown. However, there was a good game promised that afternoon, and so even the possibility of her premature death did not disturb him greatly.

SMITHSON bolted his lunch and at one o'clock entered the subway for the ball-field. With an early edition in his hand, he hustled for a seat and almost fell into Miss Cottrell's lap. It was the first time he had ever met her outside the house, and in his astonishment he almost forgot to raise his hat.

"Good evening, Miss Cottrell," he said as though they were being seated for dinner.

"Good evening, Mr. Smithson," she answered coldly, though it was only a little after one in the afternoon.

Then Smithson unfolded his paper and turned to the sporting-page. He

reassured himself as to the batting-order, thrust the sheet in his pocket, and for lack of anything better to do, turned his attention to the woman opposite, who was doing her best to prevent two children, one kneeling upon the seat each side of her, from wiping their feet upon the laps of their exasperated neighbors. It was something of a stunt, for while she succeeded in corraling one pair of stout boots, the other continued to run wild. It was a good deal like trying to handle a pair of unbroken colts. She grew so hot and confused over it that Smithson smiled sympathetically. Then she smiled back at him. If it had been at all within the bounds of propriety, he would have reached over and taken one of those youngsters on his knee.

Then came the crash. As the lights went out and Smithson was thrown forward almost across the car, he felt a tight grip on his sleeve. He struggled to his feet. He heard shrieks and the struggle of terrified men and women stampeding for the door. In the dark, men were fighting wildly—fighting against one another and against women. In the dark the car was sexless. At his feet the two children were wailing, and unconsciously he thrust out his arm to ward off the surging crowd piling toward them. Then he heard a voice—Miss Cottrell's voice—at his ear.

"Take one of them," she gasped. "I'll get the other."

He reached down and seized a tiny body. He felt two small arms twine themselves frantically about his neck.

"Got yours?" he shouted.

She was still by his side.

"Yes," she answered.

"Keep in front of me," he ordered.

His right arm was free, and with his hand flat he shoved at everyone who pressed against him, bracing with his back to hold them off from him and her. Smoke was filling the car as he began to jam to the forward door. Somehow he got there; somehow he got out.

"Miss Cottrell!" he shouted.

"Here," she answered, close beside him.

"Hold your ground a jiffy," he commanded. "Look out for the third rail."

It was pandemonium in there—a

stifling, smoky hades. Guards were running back and forth shouting orders; men were still fighting, women screaming. The boy on his shoulder was whining. Smithson began to choke. The smoke was becoming heavier. It stung his lungs.

"Miss Cottrell!" he shouted.

"Here," she answered again.

"Keep behind me," he ordered. "If you see me fall—don't move." It was the third rail he feared.

Inch by inch, close to the car, he felt his way, and when a body came in his path, he shoved it aside. His arm was like a steel piston. Inch by inch, minute by minute, he fought on until he left the train behind him. Then he crossed onto the train-bed.

"You there?" he shouted to her.

"Here," she answered.

Foot by foot he stumbled on with the boy on his shoulder almost choking off his wind with his frantic grip. Always on his left lay the deadly third rail, and the smoke grew heavier. Then it began to clear, and a shaft of light shot down from above. Some one had opened a manhole and shoved in a ladder. A policeman came scrambling down.

"Let us up!" gasped Smithson. "Here—Miss Cottrell." As she stepped forward, a policeman tried to take the boy from her, but the child buried his face against her neck and she waved the officer back. With only one hand to steady her, she mounted the ladder to the street. Smithson followed. Then he heard the clamor of an ambulance gong, and that was all he heard.

WHEN Smithson came downstairs to breakfast two days later, he found Miss Cottrell already in the dining-room.

"Good morning, Miss Cottrell," he greeted her.

"Good morning, Mr. Smithson," she replied.

He ate his breakfast more slowly than usual, actually, in his absent-mindedness, chewing his cereal. Because he was in no great hurry, he took at least ten mouthfuls for his egg and sipped his coffee as deliberately as a banker. Miss Cottrell, on the other hand, seemed to



"Let us up!" gasped Smithson. "Here—Miss Cottrell."

speed up a little. At any rate, they came out of the dining-room together, and although his hand moved mechanically to his pocket for his cigarettes, he drew it out again empty, with a trace of confusion.

"It's a bully morning," he remarked. "Want to walk a little way?" She

nodded and tripped down the steps by his side. She hardly reached his shoulder.

"If—if you want to smoke, I—wont mind," she faltered.

"Thanks," he replied gratefully. "Perhaps I will, then."

He lighted a cigarette which went a long way towards putting him at ease.

For a woman who looked as slight as she, she turned out to be a surprisingly brisk walker. When he started, he had not thought she would be good for more than a block, but they kept on and on until they were halfway down town. If there had been more time, he believed she could have made her office.

As they started down into the subway for the rest of the trip, she looked up at him, frightened. He saw that she had brown eyes—the big, tender kind of brown eyes. He took her arm.

"I wonder what became of the kiddies?" he asked.

"I wanted to bring them home with me, but the police wouldn't let me," she answered.

"Eh?" he frowned, "What did they do with them?"

"I—I went to the station with them until their mother came."

"You did?"

They were in the train. It was so crowded she had to stand, and that meant he had to keep hold of her arm.

"There wasn't anything else to do, was there?" she asked timidly.

"No. And I—I just faded away," he growled in disgust. "Guess I've been smoking too much."

"I don't believe it was that," she answered. "You used up your strength fighting the—the others off."

Her hair was brown, too.

"Mrs. Henry was the mother's name," she went on. "She wanted me to tell you how much she owed to you."

"Me? Nothing. What about you?"

The train was slowing down.

"This is where I get off," she said.

He saw her make her way through the crowd and vanish from sight. He was tempted for a moment to follow. Lord only knew what might happen to her. She had no business to be wandering around alone.

IT was doubtless due wholly to the fear of this unknown which is always lurking around corners ready to pounce on unescorted young ladies—particularly those with brown hair and eyes—that led Smithson for the rest of the week to make a point of waiting for her after breakfast and accompanying her most

of the way to her office. It was surprising how soon this became a fixed habit—more surprising still how it took the place of other fixed habits. There were days at a time when he could not have told the standing of even the first five teams in the big leagues.

There was nothing wrong with the big league, either. The Giants were putting up the game of their lives, that year. Jerry Mahan, in the office, called Smithson's attention to this on the second Saturday.

"To-day's game ought to be a corker, Johnny."

"Sure," answered Smithson. "Who plays?"

"Who plays?" gasped Jerry.

"I mean what time is the game called?" stammered Smithson.

"Say, you gone nutty?"

"I mean what are the batteries?" Smithson stumbled on.

"Believe me," answered Jerry slowly, "if you're that dopy, you wouldn't know if I told you."

At that, Smithson would have gone had he not promised to be home for lunch. He had a half-day, and he had asked Miss Cottrell where she was going and she had replied:

"Nowhere in particular."

So he had said:

"Maybe I'll see you at lunch."

That was all the promise there was, but he would have felt as though he were committing perjury if he hadn't shown up.

So he did show up, and they had lunch together quite as much alone as at a table d'hôte. There were few even at Mrs. Wainwright's who couldn't find something better to do than come home on a day like this.

It was as Smithson came out of the dining-room, his eyes shining with a strange light, that Mrs. Wainwright informed him there was a gentleman in the parlor waiting to see him. This was a most unusual occurrence. He hurried in and found himself confronting a fat little man who presented a card which read "Arthur Ranworth—Attorney at law."

"Well?" inquired Smithson briskly, glancing at his watch.

"I see you haven't filed any claim against the Interborough for that subway accident, Mr. Smithson," said Ranworth. "Perhaps you don't know you have a perfectly good case."

"For what?" inquired Smithson.

"For damages."

"But I didn't get hurt," explained Smithson.

Ranworth moved close.

"You can always build up a case on the plea of shock," he confided. "I be-

Then she turned away with her cheeks scarlet.

Smithson grinned.

"I guess we're square with the road all right, aren't we, Maud?"

But Miss Cottrell refused to answer that question in the presence of a third party.

"Unless," added Smithson thoughtfully, "I ought to hand over to the Interborough a thousand or two."

"Come, John," said Miss Cottrell.

"Look here," Smithson informed her. "Here's a man who wants to enter claims against the Interborough for us."



lieve there's a Miss Cottrell in the same house," he continued, referring to his memorandum. "I'd be glad to handle both cases on a commission."

At this point Miss Cottrell herself entered the room, dressed for the street.

"Look here," Smithson informed her. "Here's a man who wants to enter claims against the Interborough for us."

"For what?" she asked as Smithson himself had done.

"For damages," answered Smithson.

Miss Cottrell met his eyes a second.

"Right!" he answered. "You'll have to excuse us now, Mr. Ranworth, because we're off to the ball-game."

"Good afternoon," smiled Miss Cottrell to the little fat lawyer, as she made for the door.

"Good afternoon," joined in Smithson, as he took her arm with an air of proprietorship.

So they went out, leaving the little fat lawyer standing there with beetled brows as though searching for a precedent.

The Thousand Several Tongues

ILLUSTRATED
BY GRANT T.
REYNARD



By John Barton Oxford

THERE are various ways of making your eternal fortune. You can steal a few railroads, or deal in futures, or write photoplays, or work out a system for beating the wheel at Monte Carlo, or manufacture something the public thinks it wants.

But a much simpler method than any of these is to seek out Marshall Slade in one of the seedy little offices he rents when he happens to be in funds, and let him know you are in the market for a prime, healthy young fortune.

Thereupon Slade will show you how the thing is to be done. A very plausible tongue has Marshall Slade—and a positive genius for manipulating figures on scraps of paper and the backs of old envelopes. It is always some very simple scheme—so simple you wonder you never thought of it yourself. There on the bits of paper the figures mount up under your very eyes. Nor can there be the least doubt of the feasibility of the thing—not while Marshall Slade is explaining it to you, at any rate.

So you come across with the necessary few thousands or few hundreds or even few dollars—for Slade has learned not to despise the day of small things when nothing larger is in sight—and go your way, wondering how on earth you could ever have fancied anything so common as the low-priced car you had dreamed some day you might possibly buy.

You wake up anywhere from ten days to a month later. Through some little hitch which hadn't appeared at the time of the initial figuring, the scheme has fallen flat, or you'll have to put up more money than you could possibly ever hope to get your hands on, to see it through. You discover many things at that painful interview—among others, that you have no chance of legal redress, that Marshall Slade has scrupulously kept within the letter of the law. Probably you descend to unpleasant names for Marshall Slade, names which never yet broke any bones and which are easily forgotten if you have been called by them as many times as has Slade. And when presently you go storming out,

Marshall Slade grins contentedly and mentally catalogues you as belonging to that genus, one of which, we are told, is born every minute. And there—with him—the whole matter ends.

Of all Slade's customers,—or clients or victims, whatever it is best to call them,—Peter Rust was the only one who ever took that self-satisfied grin off Slade's face. Peter Rust was tall and thin and stooped of shoulder. He wore a small, round felt hat of faded black; under his turn-down collar—an old-fashioned paper collar of the "reversible" sort—was an absurd black string tie, with one loop of the bow often untied and dangling across the front of the white shirt with the time-honored pleat ambling down the center of the bosom. The wide trousers bagged sadly at the knees; the old dun-colored rain-coat that swathed his long frame no matter what the weather, was frayed at the lower edge and much worn as to its button-holes. Peter Rust did not give the impression at a first glance of any particular amount of ready money.

Still, Charlie Barron had brought him to Slade's office of the moment, and Charlie Barron wasn't the sort to waste his time on anybody not worth while. Behind Peter Rust's back, Charlie had dropped a meaning eyelid at Slade—a wink that called for twenty per cent, in the event of business being done; and Slade had nodded covertly that he understood and accepted the terms. Barron's office was just across the narrow hall from Slade's. He dealt—more or less precariously—in real estate, if one were to believe the sign on his door.

Ten minutes after his entry, Peter Rust was leaning eagerly over Slade's shoulder, while Slade strung row after row of figures across the back of an envelope. Two days later, Peter Rust placed in Slade's hands forty-five hundred dollars in cash.

Thereafter Peter Rust sat much in the chair by Slade's desk, talking the thing over with him, discussing the pros and the cons of it, watching the magic figures crop out on the scraps of paper. But Peter Rust didn't play the game fairly. The day Slade told him there was a hitch in the plans and that it would

take at least ten thousand dollars more to save what they had already put into it, Peter Rust made no comment. He sat there, crumpled down in the chair, one long leg thrown over the other, his eyes fixed on the ceiling in a strange, unwinking stare. Slade repeated his words, rather sharply, and Peter Rust got up, moved across the office and fumbled for the door-knob.

Slade, standing by the desk, braced himself for the usual biting torrent of vituperation and abuse. But none came.

The door opened and closed, and he heard Rust's heavy, lagging footsteps going down the hall. . . .

It seemed, from the accounts in the papers, that Peter Rust must have gone straight to the shabby hotel from Slade's office. There he registered, paid for one of the cheapest rooms on the top floor, stuffed the cracks of the doors and windows with papers, commended his soul to God (Slade had no reason to know this latter, but he felt sure Peter Rust was the sort of man to commend his soul to his God at such a moment) and turned on the three gas-jets of the tarnished old chandelier.

SOME one (it was either Mohammed or Confucius or O. Henry or Shakespeare or one of the minor prophets—I forget just which one it was; anyway, it's just as applicable, whoever wrote it) has observed: "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues."

The thousand several tongues within Marshall Slade all began to chatter at once, as he read those brief lines in the late edition of an afternoon paper. And because of the chatter and clatter of them, he seemed to see Peter Rust sitting there in the chair by his desk—tattered old rain-coat, baggy trousers, black felt hat, absurd string tie, paper collar and all the rest of it. Peter Rust, Slade felt, with a sudden realization that some of the stiffening was going out of his knees, had taken an unfair advantage of him. Why hadn't the man raved and sworn and called him names as the others had done, and let it go at that? This—this top-floor room at the obscure hotel—the cheap room with the cracks at the doors and the windows stuffed with papers

and the three gas-jets turned on full blast—this was different—something he hadn't counted on, something unfair, something quite outside the rules of the game.

Marshall Slade concluded he needed a drink—needed it at once and needed it badly. But at the ornate bar of the Greenwood Inn, just across the street, he found no solace for his trouble. Indeed, the raw whisky he gulped down seemed only to make the vision of that bent, uncomplaining figure at the door of his office the more real. He went back to that office, and slouching down the hall from the wheezy elevator, he encountered Charlie Barron.

"Seen the paper?" he said thickly. "Say, seen about Rust in to-night's paper?"

Charlie Barron hadn't happened upon that particular item of news, and so Slade thrust the paper into his hands, pointing out the brief paragraphs with a none-too-steady forefinger.

"Killed himself, hey!" Barron grunted.

"He was here at eleven this mornin'," Slade pursued. "Must've went straight down there from here and—and done it. Say, Charlie, say—"

"Say what?" Barron inquired sharply, as the other paused.

"Nothing!" Slade hedged. "Nothing—only, maybe—maybe, now—that forty-five hundred: maybe it was all he had, or he'd raised it somewhere in some way he hadn't oughta, or—"

Barron shrugged his shoulders. Also he cast a glance, half-scornful, half-pitying, at the man before him.

Then he shrugged his shoulders again and walked down the hall to the elevator.

Slade opened his office door and sank into the chair at his desk. The thing that was troubling him was not so much Peter Rust, or Peter Rust's money, as the clatter of those tongues within him. That was the disturbing thing—that those tongues should clatter; it was disturbing to have to realize that he had such tongues within him. Such things didn't do, in his business. He had never dreamed of anything like them; well, for that matter, he had never dreamed

of any of his victims' doing what Peter Rust had done. It wasn't right; somehow it was underhanded. He wished devoutly Peter Rust had been at the bottom of the sea before ever Charlie Barron had come poking in with him—Charlie Barron with his lifted eyebrows and his surreptitious winks.

Slade almost began to wish there were some way of getting that forty-five hundred dollars back to Peter Rust—or since this was so clearly impossible now, to Peter Rust's people, whoever they might be. And in that desire Slade recognized the most dangerous sign of all. This clearly would never do. He'd got to pull himself together. He remembered suddenly how eager Peter Rust had been to talk over the scheme and to go over the figures of it again and again; he seemed never to get enough of those figures on the backs of the envelopes. And he hadn't said a word of his disappointment when Slade had broached the news that the scheme was in danger of falling through—not a word of accusation or bitterness; he'd just marched out of the office and down to that shabby hotel—

Slade got up from the desk. The whole place reminded him of Rust. The chair by the desk, now—he could almost see him sitting there; and here were bits of paper with some of the yesterday's figures (at Rust's request) still upon them.

Slade decided he'd keep away from the office for a day or two and forget Peter Rust and his own softness in this matter. Conscience was an expensive thing to develop. Witness how only a few moments ago he had been wishing he could get that forty-five hundred dollars back to some of Rust's people! Forty-five hundred dollars didn't grow on every little old bush; and as for Peter Rust's unpardonable behavior—he couldn't help that; it was over, and no good came of thinking of it; besides, there was twenty per cent coming to Charlie Barron. Charlie could turn many a man his way. What would happen if Charlie didn't get his nine hundred dollars? Yes, Slade mused, he must forget Peter Rust—only—only he couldn't help wishing Peter Rust had



The day Slade told him there was a hitch in the plans and that it would take at least ten thousand dollars more to save what they had already put into it, Peter Rust made no comment. He sat there, crumpled down in the chair, one long leg thrown over the other, his eyes fixed in a strange, unwinking stare.



He stuffed the cracks of the doors and windows with papers, commended his soul to God and turned on the three gas-jets.

flayed him and cursed him, in the crucial moment, as the others had done. This thing Rust had done—it wasn't fair; it was underhanded; it was taking a mean advantage of him. How was he to know what the loss of that money would mean to Rust? How was he to imagine that anything like *that* was coming out of it?

It wasn't up to him, anyway. He'd forget Peter Rust. He'd got to do it, and that's all there was to it. Also he'd forget his momentary weakness in wanting to send the money back to Rust's

worn as to the button-holes, seated in the chair by his desk, or standing there with a hand on the door-knob, just as he did that last morning at eleven o'clock.

The first weakness about returning any or a part of that forty-five hundred dollars was over and done with. Thank heaven, after that first wild idea about it, Slade had been able to keep his head. Certain deposit-slips from a near-by bank gave him a little comfort. Every time the voices within him tuned up their clamor, he took the deposit-slips

people. Forty-five hundred dollars was—well, forty-five hundred dollars.

IT is annoying, to say the least, to have a man, whom you know cannot possibly be where he is, continually at your side, dogging your footsteps wherever you may go, sitting down with you and rising up with you, craning his neck over your shoulder and standing silent before you, a lean, gaunt, ungainly, wordless, accusing figure.

For ten days, wherever Marshall Slade went, there also—because of those clattering tongues—went Peter Rust. In the office it was worst. Not a moment of the day, there, that he could not look up and see a bent figure in a tattered old rain-coat much

from their pigeonhole in the desk and feasted his eyes upon them, as if they had some power to disperse this spell that had fallen upon him.

So ten days went past. The morning of the eleventh day Slade sat at his desk looking at the deposit-slips, because he had just remembered how Peter Rust's big, square-toed shoes were always mud-caked and unpolished. It was just such little details that were most disturbing; they brought Peter Rust's long, melancholy face so much more forcibly to mind, somehow.

There was a timid tap on the door; then it opened. A tall, middle-aged woman in deep black came in.

"This is Mr. Slade?" she asked. "I am Miss Eunice Rust—Peter Rust's sister."

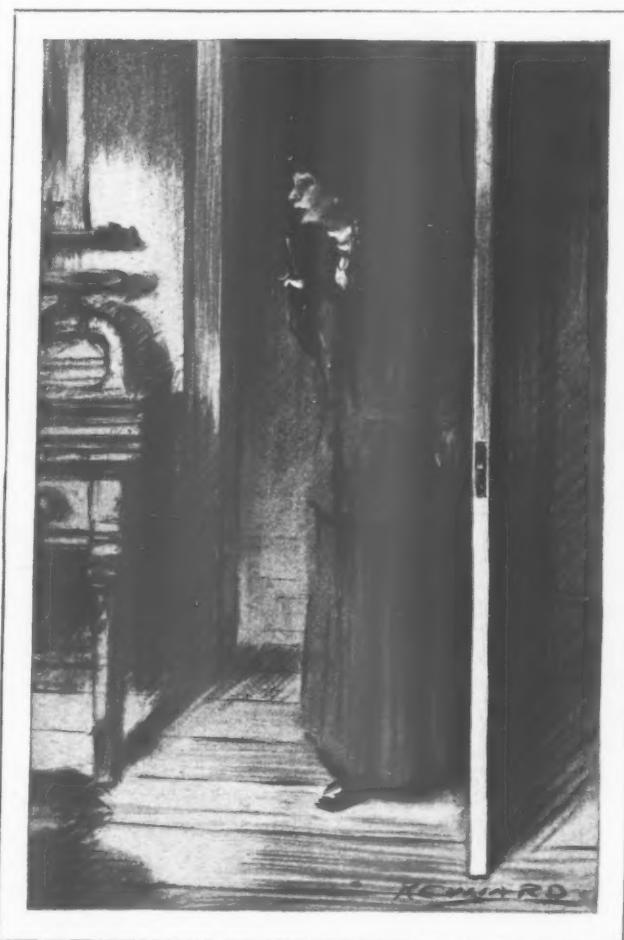
Slade got to his feet as if several hundred electric volts had gone through his chair. Peter Rust's sister! Ossa on Pelion! Now what did this woman expect! He'd have to be very gentle with her, but very firm. How on earth could he have known the thing was going up and that Peter Rust would take it to heart so?

He bowed her to the chair by his desk, and looking up after she was seated, he was startled to find how very much she resembled her brother.

The woman took a black-bordered handkerchief from a little bag she carried, and Slade had a horrible premonition that she was going to complicate matters by going to pieces and weeping violently. Instead, she merely wiped her thin lips.

"I believe you are the Mr. Slade with whom my brother had some business dealings just before—before his death," she said in a hard, precise voice.

"There was a little matter—a rather unfortunate matter, it turned out. Yes, quite right, Miss Rust," said Slade.



"This is Mr. Slade?" she asked. "I am Miss Eunice Rust—Peter Rust's sister."

"He left a note for me with some instructions in it. They found it on the bureau in that room at the hotel where he was," she went on. "You were mentioned in the note, Mr. Slade."

"Yes?" Slade prompted her.

He was aware his throat had gone dry, as with some premonition of disaster. Anyway, he hated to have to fight a woman.

"He speaks in it of some deal with you. He instructed me to come here and see you and ask you how much more money it would take to see the thing through as you and he had planned it," she went on.

Slade was taken aback. This was not at all what he had expected. He did not answer for a moment. He merely sat frowning up at the ceiling, trying to fathom just what lay behind the woman's words, just what she might be driving at.

"He said in the note," the woman continued, "that you said something to him about it that morning—something about ten thousand dollars. He wasn't quite sure, because he was so distressed about his little girl. They were operating on her at the hospital; they'd decided there would have to be an operation to save her. He said he couldn't wait there at the hospital while the operation was going on. He couldn't stand the suspense; it was then that he came in to see you. When he went back to the hospital, she was gone—died on the operating-table."

"The little girl!" Slade cried.

His eyes had come down from the dingy, yellowed ceiling. He was staring hard at the woman beside his desk—staring with wide-open, unwinking eyes that begged her to go on.

"He was completely wrapped up in her," said Miss Rust. "She was his very life and breath. Her mother died when she was a baby, and I have kept house for Peter since then. He mentioned this

deal with you once. It was just after the child was taken sick and the doctor ordered her to the hospital. My brother said this business he had taken up with you was a Godsend to him. It was the only thing that could keep his mind off the child and the danger there might be of losing her. He telephoned me from the hospital she was dead. He must have gone straight to the hotel where they found him. I was afraid of something of the sort. He was a very quiet man, but one that felt keenly, for all his few words."

She paused. Again she ran the handkerchief over her thin lips. It gave Slade an odd sensation that she was weeping with her mouth instead of her eyes.

Slade did not realize that he was crumpling the big blotter on his desk in his hand, or that the movement had overturned the inkwells, sending black and red streams zigzagging across the desk-top.

"So that," he said in a thick, straining voice, "that thing—the little girl's death—was—was what made him go to that hotel?"

The woman nodded.

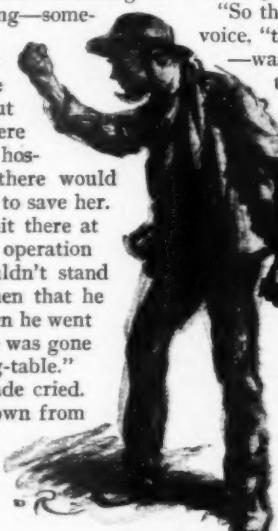
"And the money he stood to lose in this deal with me—the forty-five hundred dollars—that had—nothing to do with it?"

"Do not disturb yourself on that account, Mr. Slade," said she. "It had absolutely nothing to do with it. Forty-five hundred dollars was a mere bagatelle to my brother. He was by no means a pauper."

SLAD E suddenly straightened himself in the swivel chair. Years seemed to drop from him. Something of the old keenness and the old foxlike cunning came into his eyes. He took a deep breath, and his shoulders went back rigidly.

"You say he left some instructions about the deal?" he asked quietly.

"He said in the note," she replied, "that he was under the impression that



Why hadn't the man raved and sworn and called him names as the others had done, and let it go at that?

you said something about ten thousand dollars to see it safely through. He has asked me to see to that part of it. He said this business had been a veritable Godsend to him in keeping his mind occupied when he was on the verge of going to pieces completely, and that he was very much impressed with the ideas you had. He also said in the note that he liked you, that he thought you were eminently honest and honorable, and that he'd like to see you succeed in the thing as much for your sake as for mine, to whom he leaves his property."

Only the faintest deepening of red in the little veins criss-crossing Slade's cheeks betrayed his emotions.

"And so, if you can give me some idea of how much more will be needed, I'm prepared to see that you get it at once," she went on. "For my brother's sake, —because it was the last wish he ever expressed,— I shall see that you have whatever amount is necessary to the success of the scheme, even if it is considerably more than ten thousand."

Slade picked up some scraps of paper and seized a pencil. He pulled out the slide of his desk close to her chair and laid the scraps of paper on it, that she might follow the figures and his explanation of them.

"The thing is just here, Miss Rust—" he began in those modulated, convincing tones he had long since mastered. And

then, glancing up, he saw her looking at him, leaning slightly forward just as Peter Rust had always leaned forward to watch his magic figuring.

The pencil slipped from his fingers, rolled along the slide and clattered to the floor. His eyes grew wider and wider as they rested on the face that might well have been Peter Rust's own. The swivel chair creaked loudly as he swung back to the desk.

One shaking hand groped for a moment in a pigeonhole. There was a rustle of open pages. He reached for a pen in the ink-splashed tray at the far edge of the blotter.

"The thing is just here, Miss Rust," he repeated in a strangely different voice. "The scheme has not come through as I had fully expected it would do. Certain unforeseen contingencies have broken all our chances to smash. More money would be quite useless now."

He paused. He seemed to be a trifle alarmed at what he was saying. He started to lay down the pen.

Something beyond his own volition prompted him to arise from his swivel chair and look again at that seamed face, so strangely like the face of the dead Peter Rust.

"Quite useless," he reiterated firmly. "I've managed, however, to save Mr. Rust's original forty-five hundred dollars out of the wreck. I have it deposited in the bank. I will write you a check for that amount at once."



Something beyond his own volition prompted him to look again at that seamed face.

COMING SOON

Another series of short stories by Ellis Parker Butler—*mystery stories, built around Shagbark Jones, the strangest of all detectives, a sleuth who never trailed a criminal or wore a disguise, who never even visited the scene of the crime till the mystery was ready for solution.*

THE MYSTERY MAN

"An' there aint nothin' that can make you interfere?" he asked.

"I'm afraid not," she answered.
"The gossip is something they'll have to face themselves."

Out Yonder

A story of
Shoestring Charlie

By
Courtney
Ryley
Cooper



ILLUSTRATED BY R. M. BRINKERHOFF

MIDAFTERNOON laziness was strong upon Shoestring Charlie, of the World Famous Circus. In the shadow of the marquee he sat, his slight, narrow-shouldered form slumped in a canvas chair, his cigarette hanging dead between his fingers, his eyes half closed. Beyond him, half hidden beneath their umbrellas, the ticket-sellers of the kid-show droned their call drowsily, lackadaisically. In the long shadows cast by the kid-show banners, the canvas-men were sleeping, sprawled here and there upon the ground, their snores filling in the breaks of the main-show band echoing from the big top. The sun shone hot.

At last Shoestring stirred, to open his eyes dully at the consciousness of some one near him.

"Lo, Joe," he said sleepily, gazing at a form which had sunk into the canvas chair beside him. "Anything doin'?"

"Heard about Grace Starling, didn't you?" Joe was unfolding a newspaper.

"No—what?"

"Turned in her notice after parade to-day."

"Quit?"

"Uh-huh!"

"Why?" Shoestring flipped the end of his cigarette, dragged a match from his pocket and scratched it on the sole of his shoe. "Aint peeved or nothing, is she? Anybody sick?"

"Worse'n that," Joe Stillson grinned amiably. "Goin' to get married."

"Married? Who to—Eddie? But if she was going to marry him, what would she want to quit the show for?"

"Don't know. Don't think it's Eddie. She'd have said so, if it was. Eddie's sure having his troubles—gettin' fined that five bucks yesterday afternoon, and everything."

"Fined?" Shoestring looked up. "What for?"

"Hitting Monk—the property-man. Seems Monk got Eddie's rigging all balled up, and Eddie came down from his act sore as a goat. Guess Monk ought've been soaked, all right, but Eddie shouldn't have done it in performance. Fool thing, at that! This Monk's a bad guy. He's done a stretch."

"What's Hudon keepin' him for?"

"Short o' men. He's going to can him when we get to Baltimore."

SHOESTRING did not answer. A queer light had come into his eyes, and he had leaned forward in his chair, his hands clasped before him. A long time he sat there, his cigarette glowing steadily, his lips silent. At last he rose and made his way under the stretches of canvas toward the flags and the connection and the pad-room, the gathering places of the performers as they awaited the whistling signal of the equestrian-director calling them into the big top. The band was playing brazenly. There were clowns upon the hippodrome-track. A group of performers passed him, and Shoestring Charlie paused to stare with scrutinizing eyes into the face of Eddie Harris, of the high trapeze.

Even the makeup could not hide the oldness, the deadness of the aërialist's features. There were hollows under the eyes, the hollows of silent suffering. There was a tight, clenched

something about the jaws and the mouth which was not usually present with Eddie Harris. His smile, as he turned to face the audience, was forced and joyless. Shoestring scratched a match slowly on a quarter-pole and went on. His question had been answered. Grace Starling's choice had not been Eddie Harris.

A few steps more—then the flags slid back as their aged keeper nodded a greeting to the little show-owner and pulled at the draw-cords. Shoestring stepped forth into the daylight—then stopped, his head slanted forward, his hands on his hips.

"Miss Starling!" he called.

From a group that sheltered itself in the shadow of the pad-room a girl came forward, a girl of dimpled cheeks, of sparkling, bright eyes, a little girl of sprightliness, of beauty, of winsomeness. She was in the costume of the ring, the tinsel of her bodice glimmering in the sunlight, her silken tights shimmering and smooth over her rounded limbs, her long, heavy hair hanging in a great braid over her shoulder and caught in girlish sim-



"Lo,
Joe," he
said sleepily.
"Anything doin'?"

plicity with a flaring bow. There was something of the innocence of a child about her, a beautiful, a piquant something that made Shoestring understand the feeling in the heart of Eddie Harris and sympathize with him. The girl smiled, expectantly, half wonderingly, as she came toward him. A moment more, and she was awaiting his orders, still smiling. But Shoestring's features did not echo the greeting.

"Joe tells me you've turned in your notice," he said slowly.

A trifle of defiance came into the eyes of Grace Starling.

"Yes."

"He tells me you're going to get married."

"Yes." The answer came again in the same tone.

"To that town?" Shoestring leaned forward a trifle. The little performer seemed to read the look in his eyes, and her defiance faded.

"I think so." Her answer was slow. Shoestring reached gently forward and took her hand in his.

"Why—Grace?" he asked. "Don't you care anything about Eddie Harris any more?"

"Yes—but—"

"Do you love this town more?"

Grace Starling hesitated. Within the confines of the big top, the band blared and shrilled its notes as the various performers leaped to their acts. A clown, his great padded feet slapping on the ground, slouched past, grinned at the two figures at the flags and hurried on. The girl moved uneasily.

"I don't—I don't know whether I do or not," came her slow answer. "But—"

"But"—and Shoestring leaned close to her—"he's got money, and he's handed you a lot of bunk about the world out yonder, and all that he's going to do for you. He's sympathized with you because you have to ride from town to town every night in a circus-train. He's slipped you a lot o' joy-stuff about the society you'll trot in and all that sort o' junk, aint he? Aint that straight?"

"Ye-s."

The answer was hesitant. Shoestring smiled slightly.

"And you believed him?"

"Why shouldn't I?" Grace Starling looked up quickly.

"You've believed it, and it's dazzled you, aint it, kiddie?"

"It's beautiful." Grace Starling's gaze was far away. "And he's been wonderful to me, Mr. Grenolds. Oh, I know how you feel." She looked up at him impulsively. "You think that just because Eddie and I were raised under the big top together and that because we've been sweethearts, that we ought to get married. But can't you see," she begged, "what it would mean to me—to marry Mr. Grayson? A circus-girl is just like any other girl, Mr. Grenolds. She wants pretty things and position, and—"

"And love—don't forget that."

Grace Starling's eyes sparkled. "And that's just it. He does love me; he's been just wonderful to me. And think of what it means—why, Mr. Grayson's an aristocrat."

Shoestring smiled.

"And you're a circus girl. How long you know him, Grace?"

"Why, I met him last winter. A bunch of us gave a performance at his club, and I met him there."

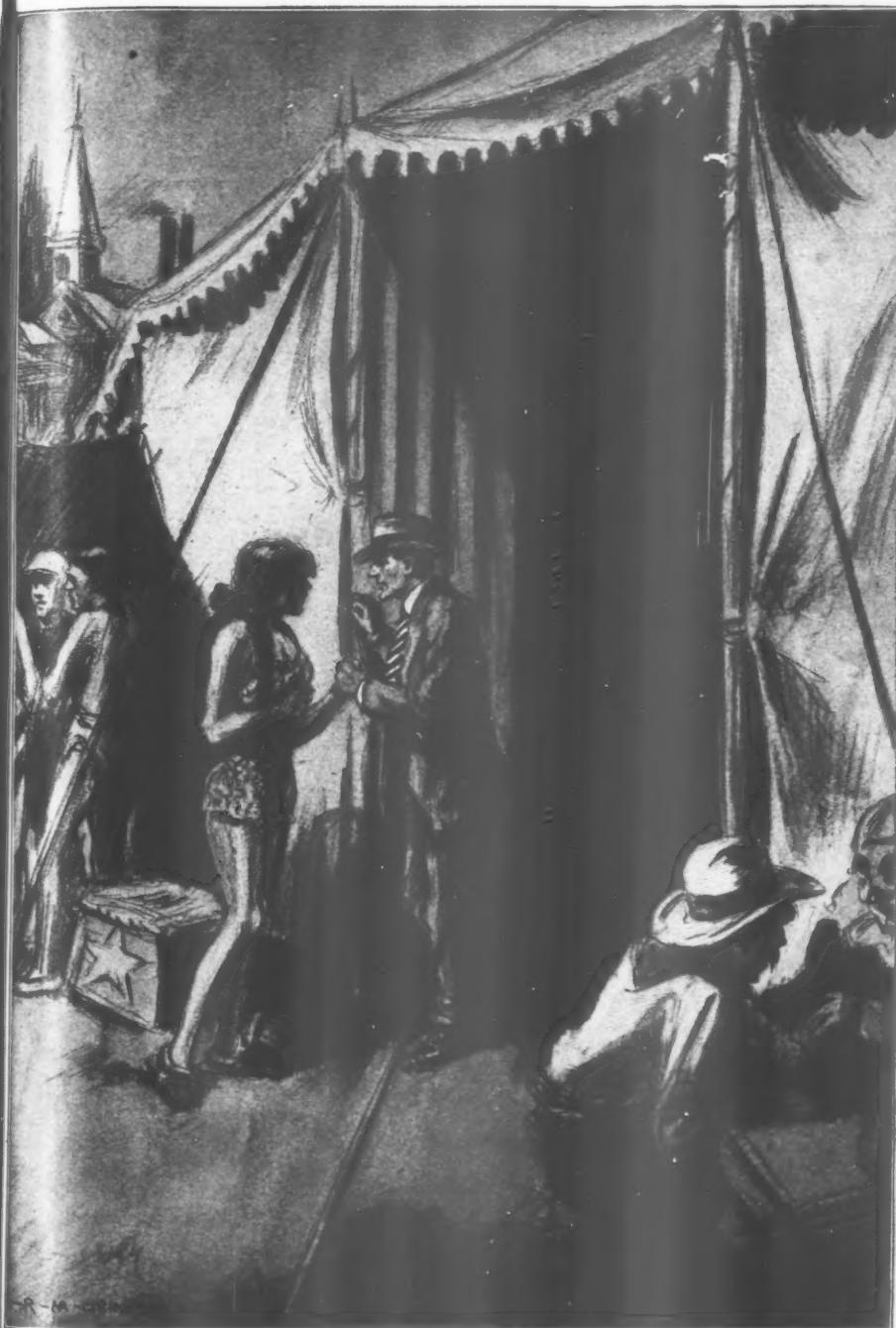
"What do you know about him?"

There was a kindness in Shoestring's tone that took the inquisitorial sting out of his interrogation. "Know anything about his pedigree or—"

"Why, of course; he goes in the best set in Baltimore."

THE eyes of Shoestring Charlie narrowed. He allowed Grace Starling's hand to slip from his, and then, flipping away the remnant of his cigarette, began the rolling of another.

"Just what I was afraid of," he said at last. "And that's got you all blowed up to a hundred and eight—so puffed up that you've went and decided, that you've even told Eddie Harris that the girl he loves is goin' to be somebody else's wife. And Eddie loves you, kiddie—he loves you better than anything else in the world. He's talked to me a hundred times about how proud he was to know that you loved him. And now—well, it's goin' to be pretty tough to find out that you don't."



"Miss Starling!" he called. From a group that sheltered itself in the shadow of the pad-room a girl came forward. She was in the costume of the ring. "Joe tells me you've turned in your notices," he said slowly.

A trifle of defiance came into the eyes of Grace Starling.

"But that's not true. I do care about Eddie. I—"

"But you love this other guy more, with his money and position and junk?"

Grace Starling did not answer the question directly. Instead she turned and involuntarily looked through an opening of the flags to where the form of Eddie Harris swung and swayed upon the high trapeze.

"I'll never forget Eddie," she said at last. "And I never want to forget him. Mr. Grenolds. I'll always want to hear from him, and to sort of watch after him from a distance, and know that he's safe and well. I'll—"

"But that's a dream that can't come true." Shoestring's voice had gone very low and very soft. "You've got to say good-by to one or the other. You can't eat your cake and have it too—that's a stunt nobody can pull. Once you walk out from under this here big top, once you take your place in that there new life that's got you all fussed up—once that's done, and—"

HE paused. There had come the whistle of the equestrian-director, and in answer there swirled about them the activities of the pad-room and the connection as the new acts hurried forth to take their places in the ring. Everywhere was action. Everywhere there was color. Everywhere there was brightness and happiness and laughter, mingling with the blaring of the band from within as the music of the next number began. Shoestring Charlie waved a hand.

"Once you leave the white tops for that there other life," he repeated, "you've said good-by to your whole little world, kiddie. Did you ever stop to think about that? You're happy now—happy in the midst of people that's known you ever since you was a little kid, toddlin' around the bandstand watchin' your father and mother doin' the tricks that you make a livin' out of right now. You're happy and you're clean and you're good. And if there was anybody that said you wasn't, they'd have to fight every guy on this here circus, from the proprietor down. Back here we know you, just like we know every woman in the circus-game. Out there"—Shoe-

string pointed a hand toward the smoke of the city in the distance—"you're goin' to be just a circus-girl. And they don't know—out there. They've been fed on tradition."

"Do you mean—"

"I mean"—and Shoestring's voice had gone hard—"that you're goin' to hear yourself called a circus-woman. Back here it's something to be proud of; but they don't feel the same way out there. I mean that you're goin' to be snubbed and drawed away from and forgotten. I mean that you're goin' to have to say good-by to the friends that raised you and loved you and will love you still—and that there wont be nobody to take their places. And when that happens, kiddie, a husband's a husband—but he aint a whole world."

Shoestring pressed her hand tight. From within there came the sound of the equestrian-director's whistle again. A bent, grim-faced figure passed them and walked stolidly to the dressing-tent. Shoestring nodded a head. "It's good-by all the way around," he added finally. "Now, that's all I've got to say—what's the answer?"

But the answer was not readily forthcoming. Pretty little Grace Starling of the Roman rings was staring after the man who had just passed—Eddie Harris, who loved her, who wanted her. There were tears in her eyes; her lips trembled. She pressed Shoestring's hand tight and drew it to her. Then again her childishness came to the surface.

"I—I wish you hadn't told me," she half-sobbed. "I can't believe it—I can't, I can't. Besides, if I'm good here, I'll be good there, and there isn't a person in the world that can say a word against me. And I'll come back here to the show whenever I want to. And just to show you, I'll bring the best people in town with me!"

"All right, kid." Shoestring Charlie turned slowly away. The whistle sounded again. A quick movement, and she had brushed away her tears. A moment more, and Grace Starling, of the Roman rings, was smiling and bowing before her audience.

As for Shoestring, he gazed after her and automatically rolled a cigarette.

Then he turned and walked into the dressing-tent.

"Buck up," he said, cheerily, as he slapped Eddie Harris on the shoulder.

The trapeze-man looked up wonderingly. He tried to smile.

"I'm doing my best," he answered slowly. "It's pretty tough, though."

"But it aint all over yet. We've got two weeks yet. Sometimes a woman changes her mind."

TEN days later, however, Shoestring stopped and stared as he walked through the flags and looked toward the pad-room. Grace Starling stood surrounded by the group of women about her, women who stared in simple wonderment at the glittering thing which sparkled on the little aerialist's finger. There came the whistle of the director, and the curious ones hurried within, leaving only Grace Starling and the narrow-shouldered man who stared quizzically at the shimmering ring. Shoestring smiled and slouched forward.

"Is that sparkler the final answer?" he asked.

"The answer?" Grace Starling looked at him with wide eyes. She laughed consciously. Then seriousness, almost oldness, came in her features. Her hands closed tight over the ring.

"I'm—I'm afraid I'm going to take my chance," she answered slowly. "It can't be what you told me—it just can't be! He wouldn't let me go into it if it were. He—"

"You're the one that's doing it." Shoestring stared hard at her and then smiled. "There aint no use makin' things worse. Here's wishin' you luck, Grace."

He put forth his hand and clasped hers. Then he turned and walked away.

A DAY—two, three—then Baltimore. Grace Starling waved a hand to Shoestring as she climbed into the gold-leaved float as the call of the bugle sounded for the beginning of the morning parade.

"Take good care of Eddie, wont you," she asked, "—after I'm gone?"

Shoestring sucked at his cigarette.

"I'll do my best," he answered.

There was a long moment of silence.

"We're going out to meet his mother, right after my act to-day," she said at last. "We may get married first, though."

"Why?" Shoestring looked up sharply.

"Oh, I don't know. He just wants me to; his mother is living out in the country for the summer—they have a farm besides a place in the city, you know, and it would make it a little awkward to go out and then come back and get married. We'd get in late tonight, and—"

"Where's Grayson now?"

"Downtown."

"Goin' to watch you go by on your last parade, huh?"

Grace Starling laughed — then the twinkle in her eyes suddenly faded.

"My last parade," she murmured. "I hadn't thought of that."

The conversation ceased suddenly as the horses of the great coach started forward. Far ahead the bands were blaring. Shoestring stood and watched the figure of Grace Starling until the parade had passed far down the street. Then he turned at the touch of the circus mail-carrier.

"Hudson says this is for you," that person announced as he handed Shoestring an already opened letter. "It was addressed to the manager, and so I naturally gave it to him."

Shoestring nodded his head. He reached for the folded paper within the envelope. A line—and he whistled. A paragraph—and his eyes were gleaming. A page—and he was hurrying off the circus-lot, the letter fluttering in his hand.

"How long'll it take to get to Rosemont?" he asked sharply as he snapped open the door of a taxicab. The driver's eyes widened.

"Pretty long way," he answered. "Take a couple of hours. I'd have to charge you ten dollars to—"

"Did I ask what it'd cost?" Shoestring's voice was snappy. "All I want's speed. Turn that there engine over, and let's go!"

A RUSHING two hours — then a whirling trip up a side-road that led from Rosemont, and Shoestring stepped

forth from the taxi, to stand smiling before a mild-featured little woman who sat in a great chair on the veranda of an old-fashioned country house. She looked up in surprise at his approach, and half rose. Shoestring waved her back into her chair.

"I'm the guy you wrote to," he began as he pulled forth a letter. "I tore out here to see if you wouldn't butt in—"

There was surprise in the little woman's face.

"Oh, you're the circus-manager?"

"I'm it. Mind if I roll a cigarette?" He took his makin's halfway from his pocket, but shoved them back again. "Guess I'd better not, though. Yeh, I'm the circus-manager. I'd 'a' done like you told me,—called up,—but this here matter's important." He looked around quickly. "Let's go inside, where that taxi-driver wont hear us." The brightness of hope was shining in Shoestring Charlie's eyes as he held the door open for her. But as he walked forth, a half-hour later, that brightness was gone.

"An' there aint nothin' that can make you interfere?" he asked.

The little woman who had accompanied him to the veranda smiled and shook her head.

"I'm afraid not," she answered. "The gossip is something they'll have to face themselves. What you've told me has borne out all my son has said about her. And if she's a good woman, I'll try my best to like her—if it means my son's happiness."

Shoestring looked up quickly.

"But how about the rest of the people—the people you know?" There was a second of hesitation then. But at last the little woman smiled.

"Only time can tell that."

"But you had to be convinced—by somebody besides your own son."

"Yes—that's true."

"And—" Then Shoestring suddenly veered; he smiled. "Lady," he said at last, "I know how you feel. You think you're goin' to bust up your son's happiness if you'd interfere—when right down in your heart you're hopin' an' wishin' for an earthquake or somethin' to change things. I know! I can see it in your eyes—and it's been in every

word you've said to me. But you wouldn't bust loose and do what you want to—because you're afraid. And you're a mother. And you've got a boy that's a fine, impetuous kid that wants somethin'—an' you're goin' to let him have it. But—" His face went a bit wistful. "I guess it aint none o' my business; I guess I've played my cards and lost."

He turned and motioned for the taxi-cab. He put forth a hand. "I'm for you, lady," he said. "You're a real person. But"—he shook his head—"they's one trouble: there aint enough more like you."

TWO hours later Shoestring turned from the taxi at the circus-ground. From the big top, the band—the clock of the circus—was playing the music that told him that Eddie Harris was entering the ring for his act on the high trapeze, and that at the flags Grace Starling, her fiancé by her side, was awaiting the call that would send her to her last moments of circusdom.

He went forward, through the mangerie-top, on through the connection, to the edge of the reserved seats. At the flags, he could see the form of Grace Starling, Grayson near by, in readiness for her last call. From the bandstand, the music of the mixed aerial number flowed forth in swinging melody. Here and there throughout the tent showed the dashing, swaying forms of a half a hundred performers as each went to the task of entertainment: all were in their positions. Shoestring Charlie saw them all in a flash—then divided his attention between just two beings, Grace Starling and Eddie Harris. A second more, and he had forgotten the girl—to stare wide-eyed, high into the V of the tent at the swaying figure on the flying trapeze.

Something had gone wrong. Eddie Harris suddenly had twisted and was looking upward toward the fastenings of the trapeze. There came a slight jerk—a gasp as the great, crowded tent saw that the fastenings of the trapeze were giving way, a bit of a scream from where Grace Starling stood transfixed at the flags. Another jerk—another; then the trapeze swerved awkwardly. A grunt from Shoestring Charlie. He ran

forward, his hands cupped before his lips.

"Jump to the net!" he called. "Jump—you'll be all right!"

But it was too late. Vainly Eddie Harris strove to brace himself for a fall into the net, but the sagging, unsteady trapeze hindered him. A plunge might mean safety—it was no great distance for an acrobat's leap. But to come down, tangled in that trapeze, perhaps thrown ten feet off the course—

A trembling, half sobbing little creature slid from the flags and ran down the hippodrome-track. She called—she gripped tight at the arm of Shoestring Charlie.

A great gasp. Safety! For the trapeze suddenly had snapped clean, and Eddie Harris was tumbling, tumbling straight and sure into the net. Luck had been his, after all—

And just as suddenly the gasp turned to a scream—a scream of strangling horror as the lithe figure of a betighted woman leaped forward and then pulled vainly at the tangling meshes of a net which had come tumbling and streaming all about her. The chance of safety had failed! The ropes which held the net had given way—given way in a dozen places. And Eddie Harris lay crumpled on the ground, buried beneath the hempen folds as the safety-device swirled and swung about him from the force of the contact.

A sudden, scurrying rush of property-men, of actors. A jumble of conversation, of shouted orders—then silence, except for the unintelligible words and half-hysterical sobs of a woman. Sudden action—then an unconscious form was lifted onto a strip of canvas and carried tenderly away, a fear-dazed woman following it.

The band played louder—other property-men rushed to the work of clearing away the net. The show must go on. The whistle of the equestrian-director shrilled forth, calling the next act. Then the voice of Shoestring Charlie sounded sharp and incisive at the flags.

"Thomas! Get around this lot and see if you can find Monk—tall negro—been workin' on props. They say he beat it out of here just after that net was set

up. Hurry up—three-fourths o' them ropes on that net'd been cut half in two! Hurry!"

Thomas the canvas-man hurried away. Shoestring watched him as he ran; then turning suddenly, he scurried into the dressing-tent. Three figures were before him, grouped about a form which lay with closed eyes, hardly breathing. One of them, a woman, was sobbing, while the man at her side held her close in his arms. The third looked up sharply as Shoestring entered.

"Looks bad, Mr. Grenolds," he said shortly. "As nearly as I can ascertain, he's in for three or four broken ribs, besides internal injuries. The best we can do is to leave him behind a couple of weeks. Know anybody in town here?"

"Me?" Shoestring scratched his head. "Nobody but Mr. Grayson here. Why?"

"Nothing." The doctor looked down at his charge. "Only it's going to be rather tough for him to be left behind alone in a hospital. You know how a circus-performer is—especially when he's been up against a mental strain as Harris has been. If we could just get him into a private home, where he'd have company, it'd help a lot. Otherwise, a despondency and everything's going to go hard—with these injuries. I—"

A woman's voice cut him off.

"Mr. Grayson can take him in—can't you, Harry?" Grace Starling was looking up appealingly at him. A bit of a cloud went over the man's face. He rubbed his hands together nervously.

"Why—yes, I think so. I'll get hold of my mother, and—"

"I wouldn't do it if I were you." The voice of Shoestring Charlie, cold and incisive, had cut in. "She's got enough to do now."

Grayson turned quickly.

"I don't believe I know what you mean."

"Just this: You've got one whale of a good little mother—but she's got about all on her hands that she can handle. I'll get a house for him somewhere, an'—"

A woman's voice had interrupted:

"But it wouldn't be any trouble. We could have a nurse for him, an'—"

"I aint thinkin' about the nursin'." Shoestring Charlie smiled slightly. "I'm



"I wouldn't do it if I were you." The voice of Shoestring Charlie, cold and incisive, had cut in. "She's got enough to do now." Grayson turned quickly. "I don't believe I know what you mean."

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thinkin' about the fact that this guy's mother's done about enough—to forget her prejudices against one circus person—without havin' to take in another."

"Prejudices?" A look of fear came into Grace Starling's eyes. Harry Grayson had become silent. Shoestring glanced toward the figure on the ground.

"That's the word," he said shortly.

"But it's not true! Harry's mother never had any prejudices against me! He has told me that she hadn't. And besides, how do you know—how can you say that?"

Shoestring Charlie stared ahead.

"I aint in the habit o' breakin' confidences."

"But you're going to tell me! You're going to tell me, or—"

"What's that?" A man's voice had cut in, sharp with a sudden fear, for Shoestring Charlie had jerked a letter from his pocket and was opening it. The little showman smiled.

"We'll pass the apologies for writin' and all that stuff at the beginnin'," he said, "and get to the meat o' the thing. You recognize the handwritin'?" His eyes went quickly to those of Harry Grayson. The man did not answer. Grace Starling, looking from one to the other, suddenly paled, and her arms fell limp at her sides. Shoestring read:

"'Naturally, I have the common aversion to circus-people that all of us in private life have. I have no doubt that it is an honorable profession, but there are a great many prejudices against it. However, this in my son's affair, and I will be good to anyone he marries.'"

A slight gasp from the woman. The man stood silent. Shoestring Charlie read on.

"But it is going to cause a great deal of gossip, and he will have to face things that he never dreamed of. Therefore I am writing to you to know whether this little girl is all he has painted her to me. I hope that she is—and if she is, I shall do my best to stand by them. I would not want my son to marry the sort of girl usually depicted as a circus-woman. I hope you will telephone me on receivin' this. I am living in Rosemont—'"

He stopped and handed the letter to the white-faced girl before him.

"You can read the signature," he said shortly. "I've busted about enough confidences already."

A moment later Shoestring Charlie Grenolds turned from the position he had taken by the surgeon's side. The girl's head had bowed. She was taking a diamond ring from her finger.

She looked up at Grayson, her lips twitching between a smile and a sob. Then she laid a glittering something in his hand, and turning, sank by the side of the man on the ground.

THUS it was that when Shoestring Charlie entered the private room of a hospital late that night, he grinned at the bandage-swathed figure on the bed and waved a hand.

"Thought I never was goin' to get that girl on the circus-train," he announced as he seated himself. "That private-house junk that Doc pulled is still eatin' on her. Guess I never would ha' got her to go, if I hadn't said I was goin' to stay with you. How's them ribs?"

"They hurt!" But the voice from the bed was happy. Suddenly it veered. "Got any trace of Monk?"

"No—guess he's gone for good."

"Well, what's the matter with the police? Couldn't they get any track of him? Couldn't—"

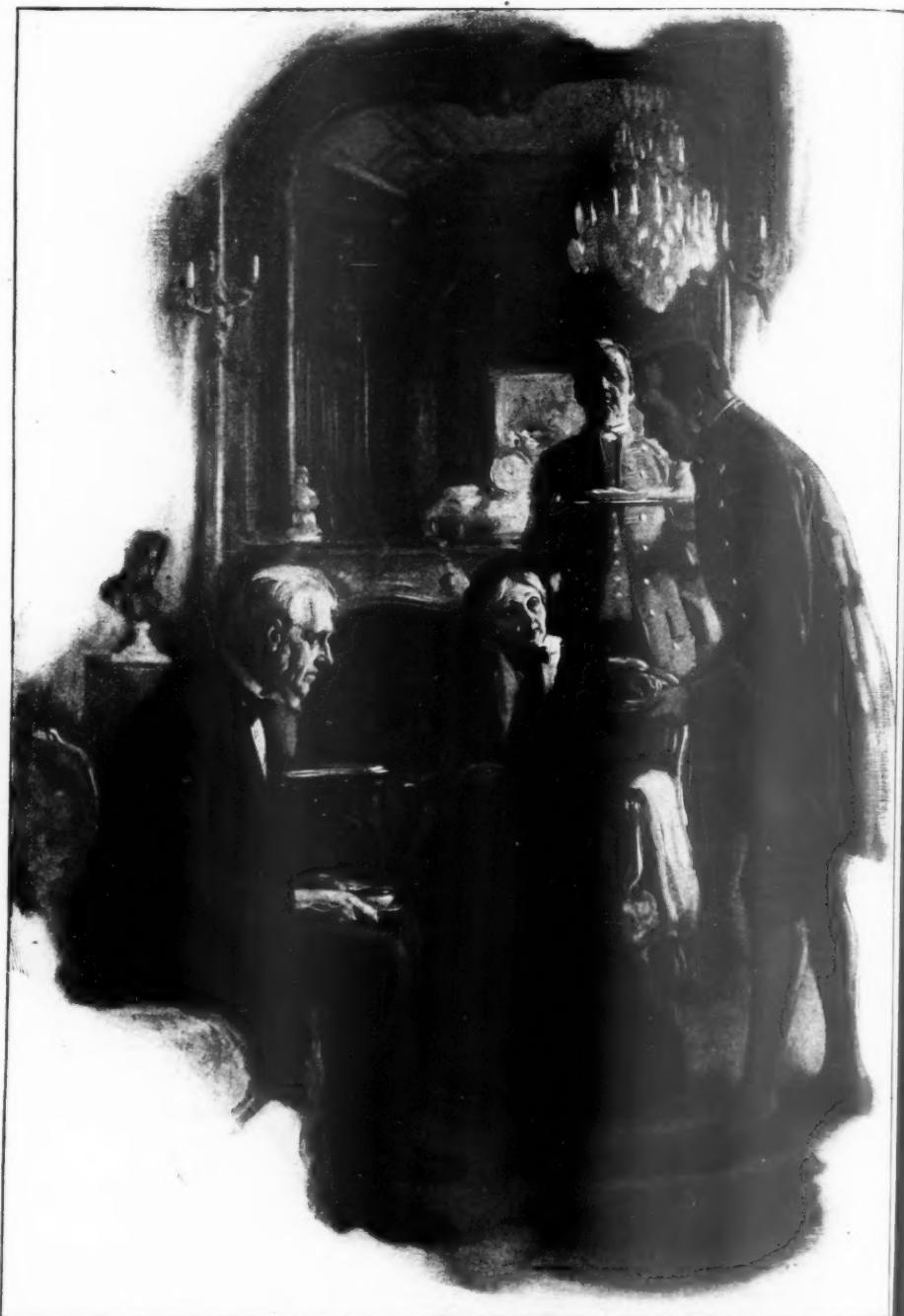
But Shoestring had interrupted. And Shoestring was grinning.

"O' all th' ungrateful guys in the world—you're it! Say, you ought to be offerin' that guy a reward f'r tryin' to kill you, instead o' bein' peeved at him. If it hadn't been for that smash-up this afternoon, I'd ha' never pulled that there letter. I'd made up my mind to let 'er slide!"

"Gosh!" There came a whole-hearted expression of happiness from the injured aerialist. "I never looked at it that way. I'd sure been worse smashed up than I am now—if she'd gone with Grayson."

"You see," said Shoestring softly, "if she'd gone with him, there'd been three lives busted up, instead o' a few ribs. I've seen his type o' guy before, Eddie—the best-meanin' bird in the world, but he aint lookin' much farther'n his nose. That sort o' guy don't stop to think that when they take a girl 'out yonder,' it's a long, rough road. Now he'll go back to his own world, where he belongs, while you an' Grace—"

Shoestring turned, reached for his makin's and deliberately violated the hospital rules in the lighting of a cigarette.



Ten minutes later a decorous procession of male servants exactly matched in height, each bearing some trifling delicacy, was presenting offerings for the timid acceptance of the old man and old woman who had alighted like frightened sparrows upon the outermost edges of their tapestried chairs.

—“Angels Unawares”

A good, old-fashioned story, told in a very new way.

Angels Unawares

By Ethel K. Train

Author of "Grandmother," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NEWTON HOWITT

MARION ROLLINS sat in her boudoir, idly opening her morning's mail with a small enameled knife. Her cheek was smooth and pink, its texture and color suggestive not, as she fondly believed, of nature, but of the hothouse in which this urban flower had been tended from its earliest budding. This artificiality, deeper and more dangerous than that produced by cosmetics, because more nearly resembling the real thing, was not confined to the physical Marion. All her sentiments and beliefs responded to forcing, and they bloomed with equal facility out of season and in.

Unexpectantly glancing through her letters, she came to one which caused something approaching an expression to appear upon her inexpressive face. It began ingenuously:

Wayburn, Mass.
January 16th, 19—

Dear Sister in Christ:

In my perplexity over the trouble of a very dear parishioner, Miss Hetty Lonsdale, I write at once to you for advice, as Miss Hetty tells me you are her only surviving, though distant, relative. She lost her daughter, who had supported them both by sewing, five years ago, and was immediately offered a home by one who had been that daughter's intimate friend, Miss Sarah Tremain. You were notified at the time, but were, Miss Hetty believes, either abroad or in the South, and undoubtedly the letter failed to reach you, as you did not reply. A week ago Miss Tremain was stricken with pneumonia, and three days later passed away. No will has been found, so what little property she had reverts to relatives. This leaves Miss Hetty, who is in her seventy-second year, entirely destitute. My wife and I have urged her to come to us, but

she absolutely declines to do so, fearing the strain on our resources. There is a Home for the Aged ten miles from here, at Mumfort, but it requires several months to have an applicant admitted. If you would care to consult with us, my wife joins me in cordially offering you the hospitality of our home, or should you prefer, I will accompany Miss Hetty to the city for an interview.

That God may bless you in your kindness to the old and distressed is the prayer of

E. BILLINGS, Pastor,
First Presbyterian Church.

"Ewing!" called Marion, sharply.
"Oh, Ewing!"

Out of an adjacent room, collarless, his chin covered with lather, came, razor in hand, the man whose privilege it had been for the last ten years to stand between Marion and every inconvenience.

"What's up?" he asked succinctly.

"Ewing" she replied, in a tone of deep displeasure, "Sarah Tremain is dead."

Thus might she have spoken if some household cataclysm had occurred, such as Thompson's omitting to dust her desk, or the butler Richards' appearing with her breakfast-tray ten minutes late.

"I never heard of the lady," her husband returned promptly, "but I'm sorry if she has annoyed you."

He knew this thrust would be lost upon her; otherwise he would scarcely have dared to utter it. For though he was a big man, he was palpably lacking in marital courage.

He had guessed but half the truth. So resentful was Marion over the defalcation of Sarah, that she would almost have been capable of digging her out

of her new-made grave with her own taper fingers, and of shaking her back into life and a resumption of her responsibilities.

"Yes, you *have* heard of her, stupid," she corrected. "Don't you remember that letter after Mabel died? Here—read this."

Ewing read.

"Um-m," he commented. "Simple-minded beggar. But I don't see how the situation's going to affect *you*. You can hire some one to look after the old lady if you don't want her to go to the Home. Once that's settled, I'll send the checks from the office and you'll never have to think of her again until you're asked to fork out for funeral expenses."

Marion's face cleared.

"I'll have to go up there and see about it," she said vaguely.

THE fact that the right time for the journey never seemed to come caused Mr. Billings, a week later, to take the initiative. A yellow envelope was the forerunner, closely followed by two rusty individuals in black.

"Oh, dear," breathed Cousin Hetty in the taxi. "I'm so afraid of these automobiles. I'd rather 've gone in a car."

Her companion patted the agitated little silk-gloved hand. He hoped fervently that the misgivings of his charge might prove groundless, but he had his doubts. From the nonchalant back of the driver and the intrepid manner in which he shifted his gears he judged him a reckless fellow, and was relieved when they stopped in safety before an imposing house.

"Is this it?" quivered Cousin Hetty, tremulous chin thrust forward. "I didn't know they lived in such an elegant house as this." She caught her breath.

"This is it," Mr. Billings confirmed her fears, having spied the scrolled number with keen old eyes. Gallantly he placed his gnarled hand under her elbow, guarding her downward step.

The door was opened by the butler in answer to their ring. Cousin Hetty's small, bonneted head, with its twist of wan gray hair, reached but little above the waistline of his six feet of magnificence.

"Is Mrs. Rollins in?" they asked confidently.

"Not at 'ome," intoned a voice from the heights.

Cousin Hetty's heart stood still.

She had never doubted the arrival of the telegram, that winged messenger, certain as fate.

It had unaccountably failed her, thus placing in an embarrassing predicament him who had escorted her all the way from their home village to the bewildering city—her minister, who stood to her unconscious catholicism in the place of God.

"May we—come in and wait?" she faltered, eyes doubly glazed with age and disappointment, gazing up into the man's face. "Maybe my cousin'll be right in. Maybe she's just stepped down street."

This image failed to reconstruct in the mind of Richards the exit of his mistress that afternoon in her little Renault, chauffeur motionless, alert footman springing up beside him on the box. But the agitation in the faded eyes stirred an instinctive impulse to protect the motives of those who paid him, a commendable desire to uphold the hospitality of the house. So he improvised as he threw the door wide:

"Mrs. Rollins 'ad an important engagement, Madam. Somethin' to do with the Red Cross," he amplified. "She said would you and the gentleman 'ave tea served in the drawin'-room."

"I know they're not himpostors," he reflected, a little in doubt as to whether he had trespassed too far upon the privilege tacitly accorded a superior servant in that type of establishment, of using his discretion on occasion, "seuin' as I 'eard all about the telegram at lunch. I 'ad no orders, but I have to get along without, more than half the time. It may have just slipped their minds."

"Oh," murmured Cousin Hetty, in obvious relief, "the Red Cross! Those poor Belgians! *Of course* she couldn't let anything interfere with that. Would you care for tea, Mr. Billings?"

Mr. Billings thought he would care for tea.

Ten minutes later a decorous procession of male servants exactly matched

in height, each bearing some trifling delicacy, was presenting offerings for the timid acceptance of the old man and old woman who had alighted like frightened sparrows upon the outermost edges of their tapestried chairs.

PART of the hothouse curriculum was an occasional Turkish bath at the club. Marion's nerves having begun to jangle that day as the result of an accumulation of late hours, she had rolled her brisk way toward the white-columned brick building of her club at about the hour of the arrival of the Wayburn train. Marion's omission of orders to Richards had been intentional. Not that she did not fully intend to take up the matter within a day or two, but she purposed first to let it be known to Cousin Hetty's escort that she considered his course, to put it mildly, high-handed. It was he who had fixed the hour of their interview—not she. Let him get himself out of his predicament as best he could.

Enveloped in a sheet, she was dripping toward her dressing-room when she all but ran into another similarly swathed figure in the narrow hall.

"Why, Mrs. Ingalls!" she greeted, wishing she felt privileged to use her fellow member's sobriquet of "Gwen," for Mrs. Ingalls was, to the greedy like herself, the icing on the social cake. "What luck to run into you after all this long time!"

Though loud talking in the dressing-rooms was prohibited, Marion had no idea of neglecting, for the convenience of the majority, so excellent an opportunity of ingratiating herself with the One. So she kept up a ceaseless chatter which floated upward over the partitions and broke in rocket-like showers of names, dates and events. Finally, when she had exhausted her repertory, she began upon the latest episode in her career.

"What do you think?" she recounted. "Such a quaint thing happened the other day. If I could write, I'd make it into a story for one of the magazines." And she went on to tell of the letter and its form of address. "I couldn't let her be put in an Old Ladies' Home," she added virtuously, feeling that her in-

tended generosity could not fail of making an impression.

"The long and the short of it is," she concluded, after intentional omissions, "that the old lady, under chaperonage of the parson, has left Wayland for New York to-day."

"Do you mean," came in tones so startlingly dissimilar to those elicited up to the present that they caused their hearer to pause in the act of drawing on a black silk stocking, "that she's coming to *you*? That you're going to *take her in*? Is that what you mean?"

Never in a lifetime of effort could Marion have hoped to awaken a response, an interest, such as this. Its intensity turned her world upside down. That this woman could so warm to what her mind had construed as Marion's altruistic intention was, to the latter, inconceivable. Why did she care so passionately, anyway, what was to become of one old woman whom she had never even seen?

But that she *did* care was obvious. And oh, how Marion *cared* that she cared! For *she* was as instinctive a climber as any chattering denizen of tropical forests, and to obtain the favor of Gwen Ingalls and her circle no sacrifice would have been too great.

"Why, yes," she answered, her brain buzzing with the effort of quick decision. "Yes, she's going to live with me."

"Well,"—her hungry ears drank in through the thin space that separated her from the object of her aspirations,—"it's one of the sweetest, one of the most beautiful, things I've ever heard of anyone's doing in my life. Won't you come in to lunch with me on Thursday, and tell me how she's getting on?"

"Thursday—" repeated Marion, faint with rapture. "I don't *think* I have anything on Thursday. . . . I'll telephone you as soon as I can look in my engagement-book."

Twenty minutes later, scarcely able to wait for the footman to ring the bell, she hurried up her own steps.

"Have they gone?" burst upon the ears of the astonished Richards, in tones of unmistakable anxiety. "Not yet, Madam," he replied, rather nervously. "I took it upon myself—"



It took her several shivering moments to master the intricacies of the electric lights. Finally they were out—all save the shaded one at the bedside. Following its glow, she scaled the heights, and succeeded in climbing into bed.

Her face expressed obvious relief.

"That was thoughtful of you," she commended. "Are they in the drawing-room? You've given them tea, I hope?"

AT ten o'clock that night an old man, having waived urgent offers of further hospitality, was turning his face to the stars as he went forth, invoking the blessing of his God upon her who was at that moment leading the new arrival upstairs with her own hand, intent upon making social capital out of this and similar attentions.

"If you don't find everything you want," she urged, "just press the *lower* bell twice. It's marked 'maid,' you see. Or shall I send Celestine now?"

"Oh no, no, no," quivered Cousin Hetty, in whom the foreign name appeared to inspire unadulterated terror. "Please not. I'm sure everything's perfectly magnificent. Is the washstand in an alcove, dear?"

In answer Marion threw open a door, revealing a bright expanse of spotless tiling, interspersed with nickel fittings polished like silver.

"This is your bath," she explained, kissing the old lady graciously upon the cheek. "Sleep well," she admonished, and went away.

The door closed. No footstep could be heard outside; the construction was sound-proof. Cousin Hetty was alone.

Sleep was not to be thought of for hours. There was much to be done first—the bag opened, for one thing, and the things got out.

They were very beautiful and tender, those little old veined hands that now began their fumbling over trifles, with the beauty of rare and brittle china. All that had once been fleshly had shrunk away, leaving exposed a delicacy of line wholly spiritual.

Amid the many potterings and delayings, Cousin Hetty proceeded to dispose her belongings. A tight-rolled nightgown, in the "doing up" of which, at the steam laundry, neither bluing nor starch had been spared, came first. In order to lay this upon the bed, which was an English four-poster, it was necessary to mount a footstool. Two fat pillows, with cases copiously embroi-

ered in flowers and birds, ornamented the bed's head, the snowy spread that covered the blankets matching these in decoration. A light blue satin quilt, stitched into leaf-like designs, was thrown over the footboard.

Having distrustfully eyed these splendors from her height, Cousin Hetty descended cautiously and trotted toward the bathroom, toothbrush in one hand, a large cork in the other.

HERE a riot of linen confronted her stupefied gaze—hand-towels and face-towels, monogrammed, embroidered and with lace; bath-towels edged with blue in two sizes; wash-cloths smooth and rough. Upon a glass shelf was placed a series of matched bottles whose labels invited the use of toilet accessories of which she had never even heard.

"I hope they're no poison," she worried. "I might take some by mistake." She went to the edge of the porcelain tub and peered over. "I'm glad I didn't forget my cork," she murmured. "It's so unhealthy to leave these pipes open." But no long tube stuck into a hole, such as had adorned the tin tub at home, and which it was her immemorial custom to stop up nightly in the interest of sanitation, was here present. Its place was supplied by a metal disk.

Having washed her face, she found a towel of surpassing smallness to wipe it upon, and gained therefrom a momentary gleam of comfort. She said her prayers beside a chair, the bed being so inaccessible.

It took her several shivering moments to master the intricacies of the electric lights. Finally they were out—all save the shaded one at the bedside. Following its glow, she scaled the heights a second time, and by placing her thin little knee firmly against the sharp edge of the mahogany succeeded in climbing into bed.

Alas! her head made no slightest dent in that stiff pillow. Furthermore, the quilt would not stay in place, but slid persistently away from the smooth surface of the linen spread.

"Oh dear," she breathed, nestling wearily about in the great, luxurious bed. "It's 'most too elegant for me," she

thought wistfully, longing like a child for she knew not what. Whereat her conscience, that sweet and sensitive thing, began to smite her.

"Heavenly Father," she prayed contritely, "forgive me for forgetting Thy benefits."

Thus eased, she fell into troubled sleep.

HAVING assumed the rôle of benefactor, Marion determined to play it up.

"You must come to dinner to-night," she said, stopping for a brief moment in Cousin Hetty's room next day. "We're only going to have a few people for bridge." Her eye swept the little caved-in figure. "I think I can get you something ready-made," she added.

In mid-acquiescence the old lady shrank back. Something very like a flash restored the pigment for an instant to eyes that had once been clear blue.

"I've got two good dresses in my trunk," was the quiet reply. "But anyway, my dear, I'm too old for fine company. I can't eat as fast as they would. I wouldn't know what to talk about. Let me come down when you're alone."

"We're never alone," Marion told her.

"You're joking, my dear," said Cousin Hetty.

Three weeks later, having spent twenty-one evenings in solitude, she had discovered that this statement had been no joke. So near desperation was she by this time that she would have braved any assemblage dressed in any clothes, had the invitation to do so been repeated. That it was not may have been due to a slight falling-off in enthusiasm on Marion's part, owing to an unfortunate circumstance. Having telephoned her acceptance of Mrs. Ingall's invitation after a due interval (during which she had not found it necessary to consult her engagement-pad), her hopes had been dashed to earth by the receipt, two days later, of a hurried note. That the reason for the indefinite postponement of Thursday's luncheon was the adequate one of unexpected departure from town did not mitigate the disappointment in the least.

"Why on earth does she want to go

South *this* time of year?" thought Marion blankly, reading on.

"Billy was pale," the note ran. "Not really ill, but the doctor thought—"

Puzzled, she laid it down.

Marion's social pool was destined to keep for months longer the same old level, instead of rising immediately by the infusion of fresh streams. Well, there were always plenty of people meanwhile who would eat her dinners, even if they were not the *best* people. Chagrined or not, she had a big house, with big rooms waiting to be filled. So the motors rolled up to the red carpet day after day, night after night.

Richards, who had carried many a tray up to Cousin Hetty's room with his own hands, in half-dimmed memory of one who had used to stand in other years at the doorway of a thatched cottage across the seas to welcome him bounding home, now perforce came less frequently.

When he did, his brow was furrowed with the preoccupation of office. "Twenty for dinner, ten for lunch, and Thomas givin' notice, and the livery to be re-cut!" No wonder Richards remained only long enough to ask Cousin Hetty how her rheumatism was.

As for Celestine, her attitude was frankly hostile, for she knew of no reason why, at the beginning, she should have inspired sentiments of aversion and distrust. If she had at all appreciated the fact that there was nothing personal in the poor little lady's inherited prejudices against "those foreigners," of whom Cousin Hetty had been taught to speak since childhood with lowered voice and bated breath, Celestine might not have held aloof so sternly.

As it was, hours piled upon hours, and no one to speak to. When it seemed she could bear it no more, Cousin Hetty would surreptitiously open her door, that human voices and laughter might float upward toward her from below.

Cousin Hetty's trays, which had been Richards' special care, continued to be offered her with exemplary regularity, left for an appropriate interval and fetched down again. But no one now took pains to consider her taste. The fact that the trays remained almost un-

touched was not noticed by whoever it was that swept the contents of the plates into the proper pail, to add to an already sufficient waste. A diet compounded largely of caviar and terrapin was not particularly well adapted to a lean stomach accustomed for a lifetime to frugal fare, as the old lady discovered to her cost. She eschewed rich food, said nothing, and went to bed at ten o'clock each evening with genuine pangs of physical hunger added to the acute discomfort of her soul.

"I'm getting all run down," she gasped out one night at last, hanging to the bedpost and almost unable to put forth the necessary strength for the rest of the climb. "I'm not near so strong as I was five weeks ago. O Father in Heaven, *what shall Thy servant do?*"

UPON a utilitarian avenue boasting several hundred similar structures stands an upward-stretching edifice styled the "Mariola." It has nothing to differentiate it from the others of its class, being fully as high, fully as nondescript in architecture, casting as black a shadow upon the pavement and creating just as much of a back-draught for the sweeping winds.

In one of its thirty "parlors," one evening at about seven o'clock, a disconsolate figure was standing, nose flattened against the window-pane.

"I can't stand this another minute," said Hilda Richardson under her breath, staring at one hissing, flashing trolley-car after another.

Her attitude was that of a child as she waited there, droop-shouldered, delicate chin thrust out, hair curling rebelliously about the white nape of her neck, slender hand beating a gingerly tattoo upon the top of the active radiator. Hilda was no child, however. She was a full-grown woman, and a very discontented one at that, as anyone might have discovered who had taken note of the purple shadows that lay under her eyes, accentuating their violet.

"Ah!" she breathed, as a car, groaning, paused for half a second with violent effort of brakes and then, having let forth one passenger, lurched onward. "At last. It's about time."

She turned quickly,—all her movements were quick,—and running to the door of the apartment, opened it; then she waited, hands clasped.

"John!" she called, when she heard a springing step on the stair. "John!"

And she threw herself into the arms of the big fellow who entered, hiding her head on his shoulder.

At this contact an expression lighted her husband's face that rendered the round, good-natured features at once wistful and sweet.

He looked down at the crinkly hair as though it were too precious to touch.

"What's the trouble, little bird?" he asked. "What's bothering you in your new nest, eh?"

"Nothing much," she declared, lifting her head. The shadows had diminished to lavender. "It's all right now that you've got back."

He divested himself of his overcoat and prepared to hang it up in orderly fashion on one of the antler-like clusters of hooks that decorated the "hall stand."

Suddenly she grasped him by the arm.

"Don't!" she ordered, with what might have been either a giggle or a hysterical catch of breath. "Throw it down somewhere. Over a chair—or on the floor."

Overcoat in hand, he stared.

"Why?" he asked soberly.

"So that I can pick it up," she burst out, smiling with quivering lip. "And don't wipe your feet. It's too—too *clean* here," she ended. "Oh, John, if you'd only make a muss!"

He put his arm about her quietly, and her body yielded to his touch. It was a body all curves, not a bone in it, he often told her.

With knit brows, when they had crossed the threshold of the parlor, he sank into a plush chair and drew her with him. There she sat upon his knee, like a butterfly, lightly poised.

"I've felt for months that there was *something*," he said slowly, "but I don't think I get onto it—yet. I'm a booby, you know."

STRUCK by the humility of his words, she changed utterly. There was nothing of the child about her now.

Bending, she pressed her lips to his forehead.

"No, you're not," she contradicted with passionate earnestness. "You're the best husband any woman ever had. I love you, I love you, I love you."

The blood surged over his face and neck; flinging his arms about her, he crushed her so that it hurt.

"It's not that, then," he whispered hoarsely. "I—I was afraid it was that."

For a moment they held each other; then he took her by both arms and gently rearranged her position so that he could see her face. She was so easy to move about, to play with!

"Now," he commanded, his relief lessening the effort incident to transposing the conversation into a different key, "out with it. I'll give you just five minutes, and then—me for the oyster stew."

Her face fell.

"The oyster stew's all ready," she sighed. "It won't take a minute."

"Great!" he applauded. "Been cooking this afternoon? I'd like to 've peeked in and seen you in your cap and apron, fixed the way you used to be out West."

"No," she returned without answering enthusiasm, "I haven't. There's a place on the corner where they cater especially to the trade of apartments with kitchenettes. They sell you the stuff ready cooked, and it comes cheaper than buying the fixings. I don't know how they make it pay. The janitor told me about it to-day, and so I went around."

"Clever dodge!" he said. "Why, Hilda, you're a lady of leisure like the ones they tell about in the papers."

Heeding not the bantering tone but the unsuspected significance of the words, Hilda caught him up.

"That's just it!" she flashed. "You've hit the nail on the head!"

Still he did not understand.

"I thought you'd like the fun of playing at housekeeping," he said disappointedly.

"I'm not such a baby as all that," she countered on him.

"I should think it'd give you plenty of time to—to," he floundered, "dress up!" he ended, in sudden inspiration, feeling firm ground under his feet.

"What for?" she retorted. "Shall I sit in the parlor in my best clothes from nine in the morning till you get home at seven at night? Is that your idea of gayety?"

Waiting, she saw that he was at last beginning to grasp the situation.

"It's a darned shame," he cried, torn between contrition and consternation. "I'd have got what I deserved if you'd gone back home and left me in the lurch!"

"You *are* a big booby, after all, John," she responded, her voice all tenderness.

He made no rejoinder, for he was busy taking his courage in both hands to meet facts. When, a year before, he had received the information that he was to be transferred, with an increase of salary, from his position back in the little Western town to the New York branch, he had rejoiced even more on Hilda's account than on his own. She was fitted by nature to enjoy the activities of metropolitan life; she had no ties the breaking of which would be a wrench (she had been alone in the world when he had married her, save for a distant relative who had brought her up, and had since moved away), and he had always felt in his heart that she was too good for the social life he was able to provide her. In New York she would soon find her level! New York had room for everybody—room, and welcome!

So much for the dream. What of the reality?

They had come East joyfully, like two children, full of the spirit of adventure, brimming with curiosity. He had taken a room in an uptown hotel with a café attached, and having installed his wife there, had passed busy days devoted to business, during which he had had no time to think of her. He had made good as a bond-clerk, and his salary had again been increased.

This New York was certainly a great town, and it gave every fellow his chance. So absorbed had he been in learning its ways that he had hardly noticed that Hilda had not seemed to share his exhilaration and had become increasingly reticent upon the subject of how her days were spent. At last he had perceived that she was losing weight,



"First," explained Grandma, when they had adjourned to the kitchen, "mix the egg, shell and all, and the coffee, with cold water, like this, to make a paste." She stirred vigorously.

and deciding that hotel life did not agree with her, had proposed that they move into a little "place" of their own.

She had welcomed the suggestion with enthusiasm; the color had come back temporarily to her cheek, the light to her eye. Together they had bought the furniture, Hilda scheming and planning to make the things fit in. Those had been delightful weeks, but now they were over. There was nothing more

to be provided; in the Mariola space was limited.

A week ago, with a great clatter of trunks and boxes, they had moved in. Since then, what had happened? Exactly nothing. Duffer that he was, not to have foreseen this—that with a delicatessen shop around the corner, an electricity-fitted kitchenette and the "maid-service" provided for all the tenants of the Mariola, Hilda would find most of her day idle on her hands.

As they ate, John's mind went back to the early days of their marriage, ten years ago. Ten years! It did not seem possible. Hilda had been eighteen then, just a slip of a girl. She looked scarcely older at twenty-eight. There had been no life that had sprung of theirs,

to measure the flight of time by, no wondrous new entity to blend her salient traits with his in a fresh flowering. How that had hurt, at the beginning! How obstinately they had clung to their hope! Very gradually they had let it go. Hilda had readjusted herself, had seemed happy. He had not looked to that old wound as a contributing cause to her present discontent; he had had the disloyalty

to doubt her love for himself instead. Now he wondered whether the wound had ever fully healed—whether she had not always stolen away at moments to stand gazing secretly into a little empty grave.

EYES bright with the tears that were behind, he stared at her across the table.

"Wouldn't a dog be company for you?" he hazarded desperately. "They're kinder nice around the house."

"I only like *big* ones," she answered. "And a *big* one wouldn't do. Imagine a Great Dane in the flat! There wouldn't be room for you and me."

He tried again.

"A cat?" he queried. "One of those fluffy ones, you know, with the bushy tails. A cat's never any trouble!"

"But they don't *love* you," she objected. "As long as they're comfortable, that's all they care about."

Her eyes looked so hungry that he gained courage to utter what had been in his heart all the time.

Leaning toward her across the table, he caught one of her hands in his and looking down at it said very low:

"Hilda, I'm fixed now so that we don't need to worry. Couldn't we—couldn't we take a—a child and bring it up?"

During the pause that followed, he dared not look at her; but he heard her catch her breath, and her hand trembled in his.

"I've thought of that," she said slowly, at length. "Oh, John, you don't know how many times I've been over the whole thing, while I've been sitting here alone. But I couldn't face it. Suppose it didn't turn out well, John! It's too much responsibility. I couldn't undertake to be responsible for the immortal soul of—of somebody else's child."

For many moments after this an emotion of diffidence caused him to keep his eyes averted; he had stirred up the depths of the pool, and he was waiting for the waters to settle.

When at last he stole a glance at her, his amazement knew no bounds. He had thought to see her still deeply dejected; and instead, she was gazing at

him with joyous eagerness, dimple denting her cheek. How she did manage to keep his poor head in a whirl!

"Hello!" he smiled. "What's struck you?"

"Something came to me just then," she whispered mysteriously, "something that would settle it all. I didn't think of it; it just came. . . . I don't believe I'll tell you about it."

"Oh, please!" he implored. "Say, that's no fair. Honest, it isn't."

"You might laugh at me," she demurred, "and I don't want to be laughed at."

"I won't," he promised earnestly. "Whatever you say, goes."

"Have you got a pencil?" she demanded. "Thanks. Would you mind handing me that pad over there?"

He arose and fetched it. Then she began to write rapidly, while John hung over her shoulder.

"Well of all—" he gasped, and then broke off.

She paused to eye him suspiciously. "Are you laughing at me?" she challenged.

"You *bet* I'm not," he pealed forth. "I think it's a perfectly corking idea. But how are you going to choose? There'll be such a string of 'em tomorrow that they'll block the sidewalk!"

"In the fairy-stories," she said, "they always took the one that crossed the threshold first. I'm afraid we can't settle it as simply as that!"

"We can take the first that's at all presentable," he cried, seizing the sheet out of her hands and fluttering it aloft. "I'll go right down to the *Herald* office now, so's it'll be in the morning papers. So long!"

COUSIN HETTY slept ill that night.

Her coffee next morning was black as ink, and there was not enough cream to weaken it with.

"I wonder whether they know how to make it with an egg in New York," she speculated wistfully, lifting up the pretty Dresden cover of a dish. Underneath was a chicken-liver omelet, swimming in gravy. The old lady pecked at it, made a little grimace and, sighing, took up the morning paper. She had

plenty of leisure to read it through, and it was an hour before she got to the advertisements.

Glancing at them idly, her gaze suddenly became fixed. Excitedly she took off her spectacles, rubbed them, re-adjusted them and stared again.

"Heavenly Father," she had cried, "what shall Thy servant do?" And God had answered through the columns of the press. For she read:

Wanted for adoption—an old lady. No one under seventy need apply. "The Mariola," 0245 Broadway, Apartment 16.

Cousin Hetty laid the paper down and folded her hands. Her face expressed utter tranquillity. Then she got up, went to the desk, wrote a note and fastened it to the pincushion. Next she put on bonnet and jacket, and for the first time since her arrival, went out.

THE coffee was dripping merrily through the percolator when John and Hilda drew their chairs up to the table.

"Now, *I*," said the former, "like to feel like a society swell. There's nothing can give you that sensation as quick as a neat little breakfast like this, with a pretty little wife behind the machine. . . . Well, I wonder when the bread-line'll begin to form?"

"Oh, John!" she cried. "I'm afraid I've been an awful fool!"

"If you have," he returned soberly, "I wish there were more fools like you."

Just then the door-bell rang.

Hilda shrank back in her chair in more than half-genuine affright.

"I'm not going!" she announced. "I'm scared to death. You go."

"It's your affair," he declared. "Go ahead. I'll back you up! Don't lose your nerve! See the game through!"

Slowly she arose, and he watched her in growing amusement as with abbreviated and playfully reluctant steps she prepared to face the tangible result of the forces whose agency she had invoked. Looking back over her shoulder, she toyed with the knob.

"Open it!" he egged her on.

Suddenly she mustered up enough courage to fling open the door.

Waiting there was a little old lady who looked up into her face and said simply:

"I saw your piece in the paper, and here I am."

Tears brimmed to Hilda's eyes. It was more appealing than that of a little child, this utter confidence, this exquisite trust that the rough years had failed to mar. Holding out warm, human arms of welcome to her whose actual presence had dispelled forever the vague filaments of dreams, she cried out:

"Why, it's magic! Oh, you darling! How did you ever get here so soon?"

"I came right round," explained the little old lady, "from my cousin's house. I thought I was going to stay there, but the piece in the paper told me that God didn't mean me to. It was a 'leading,' from Him."

Hilda's face grew very grave. This was indeed a serious thing that she had done.

"What will your cousin do without you?" she queried anxiously.

No shade of her disquiet was reflected upon the delicate features of her guest.

"It's all right, dear," said the gentle voice. "I'll tell you the whole story by and by."

"You must have your breakfast first, of course," cried Hilda. "What am I thinking of, keeping you standing here, talking! John!"

John came forward and took the silk-gloved hand.

"YOU don't like your coffee!" Hilda said, when the three were at table. "You're not drinking a drop of it."

"Oh, yes!" was the polite protest. "I should think it was very nice coffee indeed—only, you see, I've never learned these modern ways. I was brought up on coffee cleared with an egg."

"Wont you make us some?" they implored.

"I'd just as lief as not," the old lady acquiesced eagerly. "Only," she warned, "it takes a long time."

"Never mind the time!" cried the reckless John.

"First," explained Grandma, when they had adjourned to the kitchen, "mix

the egg, shell and all, and the coffee, with cold water, like this, to make a paste."

She stirred vigorously.

"Now pour on boiling water. What's your name? John? John dear, you lift the kettle. That's it. Now I'll put the pot on the stove, and that's all till it comes to a boil."

Never had they tasted anything so delicious, they declared, when the work was accomplished. And they meant it too. The marvelous taste of it was upon John's tongue, the aroma of it in his nostrils, when the three sat down to talk everything over.

As Cousin Hetty touched upon the characteristics of Marion Rollins, Hilda, enabled by her keenness of sympathy to get at the truth, was reminded of certain so-called portraits that had hung in the homes of friends in the West—portraits purporting to have been painted from life, yet scarcely resembling their subjects by reason of the pains that had been taken to ignore wrinkles and heighten the color of cheeks. The conscious insincerity of these productions was, however, in Cousin Hetty's word-picture, wholly absent; the Marion she described was the reflection of the actual Marion in the mirror of her soul.

"She's had so much to do," ended the old lady, "and so much to do *with*, that she's never had time to make a home—like this."

So hungrily did she glance about the simple room as she spoke that Hilda realized in a flash what she must have endured during the past weeks.

"It's *your* home," she said earnestly.

And John added as he rose to go: "You *bet* it is!"

"Telephone me if there's any trouble," he whispered to Hilda, who accompanied him to the door. "They're not going to let her walk out like that, you know, without taking steps to get her back. There's sure to be something doing when they get the note."

"I'm ready," returned Hilda promptly.

With joy he saw the vivid flush of her cheeks.

"I guess there'll be no blue devils today," he reflected, whistling as he ran downstairs.

COUSIN HETTY'S note was delivered to Marion with her breakfast at ten o'clock. It ran:

Dear Cousin Marion:

God will bless you for taking me. But He does not mean me to stay, because there is nothing I can do for you in such a magnificent house as this. Somebody needs me so badly in a place called the 'Mariola,' 0245 Broadway, Apartment 16, that they put a piece in the paper, so I have got to go right round without waiting for you to wake up. I will come back to say good-by and pack my bag and trunk. I've a ring that belonged to my father that I should like Richards to have for a keepsake because he was always so very polite, but I have no time to get it out now.

Your affectionate cousin,
HETTY LONSDALE.

New York,
January 10th, 19—

"Ewing!" called Marion excitedly, almost overturning the little table upon which her tray was poised, as she ran, letter in hand, toward the dressing-room door.

No response.

Biting angry lips, it came to her that he had told her the night before that he must get downtown early. Finally she got into communication with her husband over the telephone.

"It's out of the question for me to come uptown now in the middle of the morning," he replied in answer to her demand for his immediate presence. "I wish you could see my desk."

"Meanwhile something may be happening to the old lady," she warned. "She may be the victim of some fraud."

"More than likely," he returned. "I wouldn't put off making investigations for a minute, if I were you. How helpless you are, Marion! Haven't you got a car?"

"I don't suppose *you* care *what* kind of a place *I* get into," she retorted acidly.

To this he deemed it prudent to make no direct reply.

"I've got a directors' meeting at five," he said hurriedly, "which will keep me till late. I'll tell you! Why not dine early and go round there on our way to the Randall-Kings' musicale?"

"Oh, very well," was her answer, "—if that's the best you can do."

WHEN John came in that night, he had to repeat his summons four times.

"What's your hurry?" he teased, as Hilda finally appeared.

"Did you ring twice?" she asked innocently, as he threw off his overcoat and tucked his arm through hers.

"We were so busy talking," she went on, "that I didn't hear a sound till just now. —Grandma, did you?"

This appeal for corroboration fell from her lips with the naturalness of long habit, the moment they entered the parlor. At the same instant she saw John's start of pleasure at the picture that met his eyes.

Over his glowing hearth, hands folded in her lap, the ivory of her still beautiful throat set off by a ruffle of filmy white, presided the daintiest of fairy godmothers. The firelight was leaping and playing upon her calm face—upon her lips a little parted, upon her gray hair that showed thinly under a bit of lace surmounted by a lavender bow.

"Why," John commented in delighted amazement, "you look as though you'd grown to the spot. And all togged out, too! —Say, Hilda, you've been having the time of your life, haven't you, dressing up your doll!"

"I should think I had," she returned rapturously. "Oh, John, it's been the most wonderful day!"

Approaching Cousin Hetty's chair, he bent over it with that awed tenderness toward the little and the weak of which some big men are capable. He would not touch her, because he was still cold from the outside air.

"What's the doll got to say about it?" he asked, his voice full of new vibrations. "It's a pretty doll, all right!"

At this question and comment the ghosts of long-dead blushes rose up and mantled the delicate, sunken cheeks.

"I think it is all very becoming," responded Cousin Hetty modestly.

AT about nine o'clock she said she thought she would "retire," and Hilda went with her, leaving John alone by the fire.

"How lonely it seems without her," he whispered when his wife cautiously

came back to his side. "Yet only the day before yesterday we didn't have her. Oh, Hilda! all this grew out of your funny little thought!"

"There'll be lots more to grow out of it," she answered soberly. "Why John, it's already made me understand so much more about life—having her here, so close."

As she spoke, an urgent ring resounded.

"Things are moving right along to-day," she smiled. "Now, John! You go, this time!"

He adjusted his collar, shook his shoulders, smoothed his hair, opened the door—and started back. A young footman stood outside, with gloved, insistent finger upon the bell.

"Stop that noise," ordered John, and the hand dropped. But the visored cap on the youth's head remained almost imperceptibly tilted; and from beneath it a pair of confident blue eyes coolly encountered the irate gaze that accompanied the words.

This was only one more of Marion's interpositions between herself and actuality, but as John said afterward, it "got his goat."

If Hilda had not stepped forward at this juncture, the footman might have had difficulty in making his errand known.

"Ask Mr. and Mrs. Rollins to come right up," she said in her sweet voice. "Say we'll be delighted to see them."

"I haven't the pleasure of knowing your name," began Marion crisply when the couples stood face to face.

"Richardson," replied Hilda; and the two men shook hands.

"Walk in," said John lamely; and Marion looked as though she did not know what he meant, this form of invitation not being in use among butlers in the houses to which she went. Nevertheless she did end by walking in, and even condescending to "take a chair," when she was further urged to do so.

Once off her feet, and in the position of accepting hospitality, she grew less assured.

"My cousin—" she suggested, looking inquiringly about.

Hilda's finger went to her lip.

"She's asleep," she said in a hushed voice. "She was very tired."

"Poor old soul!" responded Ewing heartily. Over the women's heads the men's eyes met companionably. Then Ewing cleared his throat, for he perceived that his wife expected him to go on—make explanations.

"I'm afraid," he blurted out, "she was more unhappy than we had any idea of. She—we—she wouldn't come down to meals, though we wanted her to. It—"

He broke off. He was floundering. Quietly Hilda came to his aid.

"She's told us all about it," she said. "I think we understand. She wasn't used to that kind of life. It overwhelmed her. It wasn't *her* kind. This *is*, because everything's small, and within reach. And then, you see, she knows I need somebody—so terribly—when John's away all day. She knows I haven't got all those other things. Oh, I couldn't bear it if you should take her away."

The words were spoken almost in a whisper. Only the necessity of making the situation understood would have thus broken down Hilda's reserve, caused her to let these strangers into the hidden places. Ewing, who still stood, watched her head bend, the vivid color surge to her cheek.

What had Marion that she had not?

A sigh rose to his lips. He closed them upon it and went to his wife's side.

"Let her stay!" he urged boyishly.

"That's all very well," she answered, "but what would people say?"

Ewing was not generally quick, but he knew his wife, and this phrase gave him a cue.

"They'd say," he affirmed, "that you ought to consent to the thing that would make her happy, no matter *what* light it puts *you* in. That's what people like—er—Mrs. Ingalls would say, when—er—the thing was fully explained—her not being able to get accustomed to the house, you know, and all that."

"Would you like to come and see how comfortable she is?" Hilda asked softly. "Just for a minute?"

She had been watching the other through lowered lashes, and her heart beat high with hope at her guest's evident perplexity and indecision. Not

waiting for any response, she led the way, and Marion perforce rose and followed.

On tiptoe Hilda entered the little room and approached the narrow, low bed.

Marion, on the threshold, saw something stir.

"Is that you, dear?" said a gentle voice. "I thought I heard talking. I've been asleep, I guess. Have you got company?"

Hilda's imploring eyes hung on Marion's face. The latter hesitated an instant, turned and noiselessly went out.

"It's only me, Grandma darling," whispered Hilda.

"ROLLINS is a good sort," John said, shutting the outside door. "It's a shame he's tied up to a woman like that."

Hilda paused.

"I don't think she's so bad," she said thoughtfully.

Her husband devoured her with his eyes.

If there was a grain of good in anybody, you could trust Hilda to bring it out.

"I'm going to find out whether Grandma's asleep yet," she whispered. "You come too."

She went in first and, beckoning, delicately lifted the edge of the clinging woolly coverlid, displaying the turned-back cotton sheet.

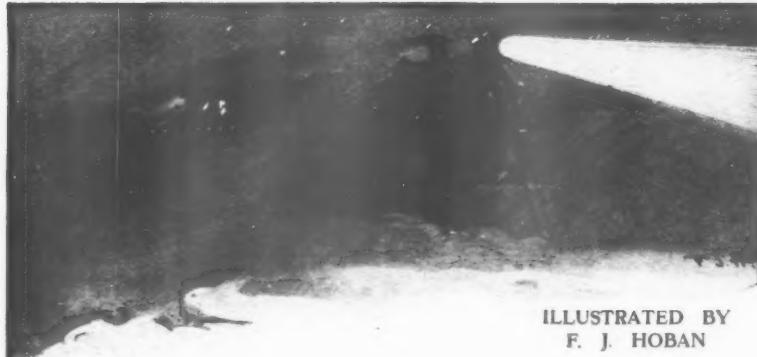
It was very strange and beautiful, that solemn, sleeping head that lay at ease upon the pliant pillow—with the cavernous eye-sockets, the mysterious lines and wrinkles, the sternly reposeful mouth. As they bent over, the old lips quivered; cryptic words came forth, and then there followed a fleeting smile.

"What do you suppose she's dreaming about?" John whispered.

Hilda did not answer. Her head was bent, her body hovering. She was utterly absorbed.

"We mustn't stay any longer," she breathed. "We've almost waked her as it is."

She readjusted the coverlid and turned away, with a look of fulfilled motherhood on her face.



ILLUSTRATED BY
F. J. HOBAN

The Man He Used To Be

They called him Wild Bob. The doctor ordered that *W* changed to an *M*.

By Charles Wesley Sanders

Author of "At the Critical Moment," "A Forced Issue," etc.

FOR the first time in his life Bob Haywood sat in the outer office of a physician; and also for the first time in his life he waited to be summoned to the private, and to him mysterious, room beyond. For the first time in his life "there was something the matter" with Haywood physically.

Because he had always been robust, he knew nothing of doctors or their ways. He had chosen this office at random. He did not know whether the doctor was good, bad or indifferent. He had seen his name on the window of the second-floor office, and he had ascended thither with blind faith in the magic "M. D." which followed the doctor's name.

He had entered rather timidly, clutching his straw hat from his head when he found himself in the presence of an alert young woman who promptly asked him his name and wrote it in a book. He took a seat in a corner and stared at the floor for a while. Recovering himself after a bit, he raised his head

cautiously and gazed about him. There were half a dozen people in the room besides the attendant and himself. There was an old man who leaned languidly above a cane, a weak child in its mother's arms, a young girl with a face like chalk, and three young men with the tiredness of disease stamped upon them.

"There must be a lot of sickness in the world," said Haywood to himself. "Anyway, I guess I aint as bad as the rest of them."

Every few minutes the girl opened the door and ushered one of the patients into that inner room. At last Haywood found himself next in turn. His body felt cold, as if he were about to face an inquisition. He had half a mind to escape while there was still time. But before he could act, the girl opened the door again and spoke his name. He rose and passed through the door. A man of Haywood's own age, thirty-five or thereabouts, was talking briskly into a telephone-receiver. He motioned Haywood to a seat with a quick glance at him. When he had finished talking, he



There were half a dozen people in the room besides the attendant and himself. "There must be a lot of sickness in the world," said Haywood to himself. "Anyway, I guess I ain't as bad as the rest of them."

wheeled about from the telephone and faced his new patient.

"Well?" he said, speaking like a man whose time is precious. "What seems to be the trouble?"

"Dizzy spells, mostly," said Haywood.

The doctor sank into a chair and drew it close to Haywood's. He laid his long fingers on Haywood's wrist and demanded to see his tongue. He asked rapid-fire questions about Haywood's digestion and about the pains he had. Haywood answered as best he could. He was a good deal frightened by what the questions might portend.

"Just strip to the waist," the doctor said at last, "and lie down here."

"Is it something serious, Doc?" Haywood asked as he obeyed.

"Don't know yet," the doctor answered. "Tell in a minute. What's your business?"

"Railroad engineer," Haywood answered.

"Um," said the doctor.

For ten minutes, stethoscope in hand, he brought auscultation and percussion to his aid. He listened and tapped, and tapped and listened, till he had covered Haywood's brawny chest and muscled back.

"That's all," he said.

HE kept his keen eyes on Haywood while the engineer got back into his clothes. The stethoscope still dangled in his hand. He frowned a little and pursed his lips. At last Haywood had finished, and he turned for the verdict.

"Well?" he asked.

"Drink?" asked the doctor.

"A little beer now and then when I'm off duty. It's against the rules."

"How much beer?"

"Never more than two glasses at a time."

"Smoke?"

"No. I chew on the engine—about a package every three days."

"Worse than smoking for you," said the doctor. "Quit it, and quit drinking beer—even a glass."

"Well, what's the matter with me? What causes those dizzy spells? They're getting pretty bad. The other night on the engine everything was a blur. And I was coming to a station, too. I could hardly see the fixed signals."

"Indigestion causes that," the doctor said.

"But I've always eaten like a horse," Haywood objected.

"Cut your food in half. We can clean up the indigestion, and the dizzy spells will go away. . . . But you've got to slow up. You've been running your train too fast."

"They call me Wild Bob," said Haywood with some pride. "I get 'em over the road."

"Exactly," said the doctor. "Well, from now on your ambition wants to be to change that *W* to an *M*."

Haywood puzzled over that for a minute.

"Mild Bob?" he hazarded at last.

"That's it," the doctor said. "You've been tearing yourself to pieces. There's nothing serious the matter—so far. But there will be if you don't ease up. You've kept your nerves tight as violin-strings for a good many years. You've never had any repose. And you've got to have it. Something will give way, otherwise. If you find you can't run your engine the way other men run theirs, you'll have to find some other employment. You've got to learn to relax. You have no organic trouble yet, but your heart will begin to get sympathetic after a while if you don't look out."

"Can you fix me up as good as I used to be?" Bob Haywood asked anxiously.

"No, I can't. Neither can Nature. You've gone far into Nature's debt. You've got to pay. She will wait just so long. In time you can make a good, sound man out of yourself. But you will never be the man you used to be.

You've come to a sign-post that reads, 'Go slow.' You may disregard it if you like, but if you do, you'll have a smash-up. See me again in a week. Good day."

OUT in the June-dazzled street Bob Haywood walked slowly, his head bent, his eyes unseeing. So he had got "his"? He was doomed to become one of the patient, plodding brethren. He, the alert, the eager, the brilliant, was to become the quiet, the sober, the ordinary. The reputation he had built up for being the best runner on the road was to go by the board. And how those who hated him would gloat. Those who hated him! They were legion. He knew that now bitterly, as he had known it all along indifferently. Before, he had mocked at their hate and their envy; now those would be keen-edged weapons in their hands.

Good Lord, he would have to begin to take care of himself! The idea was loathsome. He who had devoured his food in great quantities would now have to pick and choose and leave the table hungry. He would have to trundle his trains over the road instead of slamming them through at top speed. No more would he hurl himself into telegraph offices with a "Whatcha got?" to the operator. No more would he seize an order and be up and away before the operator had half finished droning it. No more would he dodge into sidings at meeting-places while superior trains bellowed at him a quarter of a mile away. Soon the dispatcher would have ceased to inquire whether "Haywood could make it" when the time was close. No more would the dispatcher give him a few minutes the best of it because he knew Haywood would do his uttermost to make up the precious minutes. In a word, the day of his greatness had passed. Before him stretched a gray highway.

"*Sic transit gloria mundi*," he felt; but he only said, "It's fierce that this thing should happen to me. Any of them other mutts wouldn't 'a' minded."

THE first-trick dispatcher was swearing softly under his breath. He was still too astonished to be altogether

angry. He couldn't figure it out. Wild Bob Haywood had fallen down on a time-order. The thing seemed incredible to the dispatcher. There was no precedent for it, where Bob Haywood was concerned. Why, in the past he had seen Haywood make infinitely better time than was required of him in this case. He ran his eyes over the sheet again to reassure himself. Yes, it was all there as plain as the nose on his face. Haywood had till one-ten p. m. to make the East End Double Track for First Fifty-two. And it was now one-twelve by the standard clock on the wall. The Fifty-two was waiting at the East End, held there by the dispatcher's orders, while he puzzled out his problem. His facts verified, he called the Double Track again impatiently.

"That Forty-nine in sight?" he asked.

"Not yet," the operator answered.

"Copy four," the dispatcher snapped.

There was one way only out of the difficulty. He must send an order to Haywood in care of the conductor of First Fifty-two. Haywood had left Greensburg, the first station east of the Double Track, and he had not made the Double Track inside his time. Therefore he must be lying in to clear at the quarry siding. At this siding there was no operator. The difficulty of the situation lay in the fact that there was more than one Fifty-two. Depending on Haywood's speed, the dispatcher had "fixed him out" only on the first section. Unless he sent orders over to Haywood, Haywood would have to lie in at the quarry till all the Fifty-twos—three of them—had come and gone. And the second and third Fifty-twos were an hour and a half late.

"When are we going to get out of here?" Colton, conductor of the first Fifty-two, demanded of the operator at the Double Track.

"In a minute," the operator replied. "You've got to take an order over to the Forty-nine."

"And stop at the foot of that hill and probably double up it?" the conductor demanded.

"You've got to take the order," the operator said. "You can do your own doubling. I wont be there."

"Don't get fresh," said Colton, his blood running up to meet his brick-red hair. "Who's on that Forty-nine?"

"Haywood," the operator said.

Colton turned to his engineer. Both of them were among those who "had no use for" Haywood.

"What'd I tell you?" said Colton, though he had told the engineer nothing. "That guy is losin' his grip. I've noticed it in the last week. He was up to see a doctor about a week ago. I bet he's got something the matter with him. 'Our best runner' is up against it at last, and I guess there wont be no mourners. He's been spreading himself too thick for a good many years. Our best runner—my foot! He aint no better than anybody else, only he's been the pet of the dispatchers, always gettin' the best of it. Mebbe this'll put a crimp in him."

The operator came over to the window with the order. It read:

C. and E., No. 49 at Quarry Siding, care Conductor 1st 52. 2nd 52 Eng. 263 wait at East End Double Track till 2 p. m. for No. 49 Eng. 298.

"Well, that sticks us, all right," said Colton as he shoved the flimsies into his pocket.

"You better not go shooting off your face to Haywood," the operator said. "He hasn't been feeling very well for a couple of weeks. He might biff you one."

"He couldn't biff one side of me," Colton said angrily. "I'll tell him where he gets off."

It was enough to anger a conductor. Colton's engineer should have pulled away from the Double Track without orders. Gathering headway on the level, the train should have sped up the hill without trouble. Now it would have to be stopped at the bottom of the hill while the orders were delivered. If they had to double the hill, there would be a loss of twenty minutes at least. Then the dispatcher would stop them before long to give those twenty minutes to opposing trains. Altogether they stood to be half an hour later than they should have been. Colton swore fluently as he rode the engine over to Quarry Siding.

HAYWOOD, sitting in his cab at the siding, knew that he had fallen down. In the old days he would have made good on that order. But he couldn't do it now. For a week the doctor's words, "You'll never be the man you used to be," had been ringing in his ears. And in his heart he knew that what the doctor said was true. He was still a capable engineer, but he had lost his grip a little. Where he had sat tense and rigid in his cab, he now lolled back in his seat, "taking it easy," as the doctor had prescribed. He had been a daredevil, but also he had been a man of sound sense. He had no wish to kill himself, or to go permanently lame, at the half-mile-post in his life.

He had accepted the dispatcher's order in good faith. He had believed sincerely that he could make the Double Track in the time allotted him. But he had not wheeled them to Quarry Siding as he should have done. He had not driven his engine as he had driven it in the past. When he came to the siding, he saw that the time between there and the Double Track was too brief. He could do nothing but "go into clear."

The conductor came over from the rear end. He was a silent veteran who was not among Haywood's enemies. He had lived and worked too long to be spiteful toward Haywood for the reason that others were spiteful.

"Couldn't make it, eh, Bob?" he said leisurely.

"Nope. Time's too short now," Haywood answered with studied carelessness.

"I suppose we'll have to lie here for all the Fifty-twos," the conductor said. "The dispatcher should have fixed us out on that second one if he had any time to spare. This is fast merchandise we got."

"I did the best I could," Haywood said, and it was the first time he had had to say that to any man.

The conductor leaned against the side of the cab. Haywood hung from the cab, his eyes on the track, his ears attuned for the whistle of the Fifty-two. The whistle came presently, and the Fifty-two's engine hove into sight.

"They're slowin' down," the conductor

said. "Those other sections must be late. I guess this un's got orders for us."

The engine of the Fifty-two stopped so that her pilot was opposite the pilot of the Forty-nine's engine. Colton sprang down, the flimsies in his hand. That angry glow was still in his face under his brick-colored hair. His small, white-lashed eyes were snapping. He tore off two copies of the order and handed one to the conductor and one to Haywood. Then he shoved the remaining copy up to Haywood to sign. When both the men had signed, Colton raised his eyes to Haywood's face.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Can't you make the time?"

Among all his enemies Haywood had chiefly despised Colton. Colton was a big, ungainly man with a mean, ugly face and a warped disposition. He had few friends. In the old days he had talked about Haywood, and Haywood had threatened him into silence. They had spoken only when business demanded it, after that.

Colton did not hate Haywood for his skill alone; he hated him for being the kind of man he was. For Haywood was quite a figure of a man in an engine cab. He was slenderer than Colton, but a little taller. Haywood had a hot blue eye, a straight nose of generous proportions, a mouth as generous in its way, and a chin that had not been slighted.

But before he had asked his insulting question Colton had seen something in Haywood's face which he had never seen there before. The light in the blue eyes had cooled somewhat; there was a kind of gray pallor under the engineer's skin. Colton perceived that some of the force had gone out of him. It was a confirmation of the report that Haywood was ill.

The big conductor had no sooner put his question than the gray pallor disappeared from Haywood's face. His blood flamed up. His eyes grew hard and cold. No man on the road—least of all Colton—had ever dared talk to him like that before. He leaned down.

"What's it to you whether I can make the time or not?" he asked.

"It's a lot to me," said Colton. "If

you had made the Double Track, we'd have been on our way. Now we have to double." A sneer curved his lips. "They say you've lost your grip. I guess you have."

Haywood disappeared inside the cab. In a second he showed in the gangway and jumped to the ground. Colton gave a step and then held his place. He was as big as Haywood, and Haywood was sick. What had he to fear?

"I told you once before that if you didn't keep your mouth shut about me, I'd smash it in for you," Haywood said. "I'll do it now, for two cents."

"I don't think you will," Colton snarled. "You better try it out if you think you can. No man is goin' to tell me when to speak and when not to."

Haywood stood staring at him. The engineer of Colton's train leaned out of the cab window to look and listen. The veteran conductor edged up toward the men. . . . Then Haywood struck out with his clenched right fist.

He could not tell afterward just what happened. He knew that he went suddenly dizzy with a dizziness beside which former attacks had been mild. Then Colton rained blows on his face and body. He was in the engine cab, and the fireman was drenching his face with cold water, before he revived. The caboose of Colton's train was passing his engine, and Colton was swinging himself to the step when Haywood looked from the cab window. Colton, unmarked, grinned. Haywood knew that his own face was bruised and sore. He pulled out of the siding, a saddened, chastened, humiliated man.

"I guess that doctor was right," he said to himself in bewilderment. "I'm all in. Think of that guy lickin' me, and me not getting in a single punch! He couldn't have done it a year ago. It's the end of me, I guess. I suppose the doctor hid a lot from me."

The story of the encounter got discreetly over the district. A majority chuckled over it. Haywood had been too fresh, anyway. He was no better than anyone else. He had been hanging a bluff. Look now how he was running. Why, he couldn't make as good time as lots of the youngsters.

And that talk came to Haywood's ears. He retired into himself. He had no word of greeting for those who had never hated him. The dispatchers had taken to sending him curt messages. They no longer depended upon him as they had done in the old days.

So Haywood went his lonely way, mystified and sadly wondering that his little world should have changed so soon.

SIX months later Haywood let himself down from his engine at the telegraph office at East End Double Track. It was a day of raucous wind and blinding snow. Even the early autumn had been wild, and the winter had started in as if it intended to break as many records as possible. Already there had been more snow than usually fell in a whole season, and the winds knew no quiet. They piled snow all along the right of way, and they sang and sobbed and moaned in the telegraph wires. Many times poles had snapped and crashed down. Benumbed linemen made their slow way over the road day by day, repairing and patching to keep the circuits up. Railroading had become a nerve-racking science. The elements were tiring the men and wearing down the equipment. Engineers were glad to get through at all; attempts to "wheel 'em" were few. Tempers were sharpened to keen edges, and there were many squabbles — personally among crews and operators, and by telegraph among crews and dispatchers.

As Haywood went into the telegraph office, the gray day was receding before a drab twilight. All the signals outside were alight, and the telegraph office was gloomy in the dull rays from the oil lamps. Haywood was running a first Forty, and he had caught Colton as his conductor. No word had been passed between him and Colton since they had fought and Colton had vanquished him, except those monosyllables that business required. Colton wore an air of triumph in Haywood's presence, but Haywood seemed impasse.

Indeed, he was a changed man as he stood at the window of the telegraph office, his gloves folded under his clasped

hands, his eyes on the operator's instruments. He never showed impatience at delay now. He appeared content to wait the dispatcher's good time. He did the best he could with his orders, but he took no chances. But he was in better health. He had seen his doctor only a week before, and the doctor had said that he would be all right if he kept control of his nerves as he had been doing. He had given up his mild indulgence in beer and chewing tobacco, and as a result there was a better color in his face than there had been six months before. He had had two queer experiences. One day after the doctor had been prescribing for him for four months and had commented favorably on his condition, Haywood had been running light from terminal to terminal. With only his caboose behind him, he had been spinning over the road. His orders had been easy. Indeed, he had lain on sidings a good deal of the time. At Randall he had received a time order giving him fifteen minutes to make Cridersville and fifteen minutes more to make Wayne. Between the order station and Cridersville he had been delayed by a broken eccentric-strap. When he had reached Cridersville he had eight minutes to go over to Wayne. When the switch-lights at the east end of the siding had come into view he was skipping along at forty miles. He had plenty of time to make Wayne if he stole a few minutes on the clear. With only his engine and caboose, getting in would take but a few seconds. He had decided, as he passed the east switch, to go over. By the time the west-switch lights had showed, he had come suddenly to himself. He had been grasping the throttle with his old-time clutch, and his body had been tense. He had relaxed quickly, shut off and backed in at the west switch.

"I believe," he had said to himself, "that I could be as good as I ever was if I tried. But I suppose I got to take care of myself."

HAYWOOD'S supposition carried all the weariness of resignation to a fate that was galling to a man of his temperament; and as he stood and

waited for his orders now, that resignation was upon him like a physical load.

Presently the operator came to the window with two books of flimsies in his hand. He laid them down before Colton and Haywood. The first order, addressed to the operator but required to be delivered to all crews, read.

Hold all eastbound trains except Extra East 298.

The second order read:

Eng. 298 run extra to Quarry Siding and return to East End Double Track.

Then there was this message from the dispatcher:

Third Thirty-nine is disabled at Quarry Siding. Go over there extra with your engine and help them to clear at Double Track.

That gave Haywood and Colton right to go to Quarry Siding as an extra and bring in the Thirty-nine with her disabled engine. No trains could pass the Thirty-nine westbound, because there were no wait-or-meet orders for the Forty at Double Track. No trains could leave Double Track because the operator had the hold order.

Haywood crept cautiously from the Double Track and started on the main track for Quarry Siding. The wind was still working its will, and the snow was a blanket of white. The engine pushed the blanket aside as it slid slowly over the track. Colton stood in the gangway of the engine, his eyes on Haywood.

"You might let her out just a leetle," he said at length sarcastically. "I know you don't care about getting over the road any more, but I do."

Haywood made no reply. He stared at the snow on the pane. Colton spat viciously into the snow and muttered to himself. Not once did Haywood increase that cautious speed. In twenty minutes there was the crack of a single torpedo under the engine. It was a stop signal.

As the engine stopped, a flagman climbed into the cab. He was covered with snow, and he shivered as he stood before the firebox.

"We're just east of the west switch," he said. "You going to drag us into Double Track?"

"Drag is right," Colton sneered. "We dragged along over here with a light engine."

The flagman looked from the sandy-

out, an order in his hand. He showed a copy to Colton and one to Haywood.

"It's an order for you to go over to the yards," he said. "There's a wreck at Quincy. Number Five got into a freight. Lot of people hurt. They want you to get a move on."

Haywood opened up and hurried the crippled Thirty-nine into clear.

The head man cut the engine off. The engine gathered speed till it was leaping through the night. They came to West End Double Track and found the switch set to let them out and the block to let them pass. They sailed by the little shanty and hit the main track for the yards. As they stopped at the yard-master's office, they heard the round-house whistle hoarsely screaming its news of disaster.

With Colton close behind him, Haywood ran into the yard office. The operator there had several orders for him. When he had read them all, Haywood found he had right of way over everything from the yards to Quincy.

In fifteen minutes the wrecking train was ready and the engine was hooked up to it. At the last minute the yard-master came from his office.

"They want you to make all the time possible, Haywood," he said. "It's a bad wreck. Lot of people hurt."

"I'll make the time," Haywood said. They fled through the yards, came to the West End Double Track, found the



He looked down at Colton with something of his resolution transfiguring his face. His hand groped behind him and found a wrench. He brought it into view. "Colton," he said calmly, raising his voice only so that it might carry, "if you monkey with me on this trip, I'll just mash your face in with this. Get me?"

haired conductor to the engineer. Haywood did not move a muscle.

It was half an hour later when Haywood "dragged" the Thirty-nine into the Double Track. As his engine crept onto the north track, the operator sprang

signals set for them there and hit the Double Track. As they approached the East End, Haywood eased her off. But presently through the curtain of snow he saw the faint light from a lantern swinging him ahead. He opened her up again.

A mile east of the East End Double Track was a public road. There were no gates there. Haywood eased off a bit as he neared this road. He had no wish to run down a vehicle. His whistle screamed a warning.

"Why don't you let her go?" a voice said at his elbow.

The engineer looked down into Colton's upturned face. A curious change had come over Haywood. He was eager for the run over to Quincy. He had no fear, no elation. His old desire for speed was in his heart, and yet his nerves were steady. He lolled in his seat, though he was getting or was just about to get everything out of his engine that she had in her. He felt that he could make those fifty miles without using up an ounce of that precious reserve force that had been slowly gathering in him in the last six months.

And he had no intention of letting Colton make him lose his temper now. He would not lose his temper. He would not let himself feel the slightest throb of triumph that he could wheel 'em as he was doing. He would sit there as cool a man as ever handled a throttle. He would make as good a run as he had ever made, and he would not burn himself up doing it. He looked down at Colton with something of this resolution transfiguring his face. His hand groped behind him and found a wrench. He brought it into view.

"Colton," he said calmly, raising his voice only so that it might carry, "if you monkey with me on this trip, I'll just mash your face in with this. Get me?"

The man who had once licked him stood and stared up at the engineer. He saw something in Haywood's face which he had never seen in Haywood's reckless days nor in his meeker ones. And Colton was not innately a brave man.

"You're nutty," he said at last.

Haywood said nothing. He had gained his point. He could sense that in Colton's demeanor.

AFTER they had passed the public road, Haywood "let her out" for all she was worth. Colton, standing in the gangway, had no complaint to make. Indeed, he began to feel a bit uneasy. They were fleeing in a whirl of snow and with a roaring wind at their back. The snow shut them in. They could see nothing. Any visible signal would be useless. The crack of a torpedo would be their only warning in case anyone sought to stop them. That might happen, even though they had the right of way.

Haywood was taking things easy. His hand rested loosely on the throttle. His respiration was no faster than if he had been sitting in a telegraph office waiting for orders. Of course his attitude cheated him of any "fun" there might be in the trip. In the old days his elation would have run high, but he would never again pay the price that that feeling demanded.

Soon Haywood judged that they must be nearing Quarry Siding. That siding was sometimes used as a storage track in winter. It was policy to approach the switch under control, for this wind might carry a car down to the switch and leave it there, projecting over the main. But Haywood kept on going. He could not afford the loss of a precious minute or two. They passed the west switch without mishap and sped to the east switch. As they were almost upon it, Haywood saw a shape loom out of the snow to his left. There was no time to meet the emergency. He did not shut off or use his air. In a lightning flash of decision he saw that if he had to hit something he might as well hit it hard. The left side of the engine took off a corner of the box-car. There was a shattering of glass and a scraping along the side of the engine and the sides of the cars, and then the switch was behind them. So far as Haywood could see, no damage had been done.

"Why don't you ease her off when you got a siding like that to pass?" Colton shouted at his elbow.

"Shut up," said Haywood. "I'm running this engine."

"I'm running the train," Colton belied. "By George, I'll report you when we get in."

Again Haywood said nothing. The wrench was handy at his side. The engine hurtled itself through the dark.

And now Haywood was conscious of a change in himself. Twice he came to himself, as out of a kind of dream, to find that his clutch on the lever had become tense and that he was leaning forward with parted lips. As soon as he made the discovery, he relaxed, and then a curious trembling ran through him.

"I'm beginning to burn myself up," he said in disgust. "I'll be a wreck by the time we get to Quincy."

He held his relaxed position for ten miles. Then they neared a station. As the block flashed into view and Haywood saw that it was set to let him in, he felt for the third time that his nerves were tense. He slackened his engine's speed.

"What're you slowing up for now?" Colton demanded. "You going to take it easy on the main and hop over sidings?"

At Haywood's touch the engine leaped forward again and gained and maintained her former speed. Five miles dropped behind them in a few minutes. Then Haywood swore under his breath.

"There I go again," he said. "Why can't I control myself? I aint getting any fun out of this. I'm trying to take it easy. Why can't I? If I find myself hanging on just once more, I'm going to drop down to twenty miles if I never get over there."

The fireman came into the cab. He had fixed his fire, and sweat was running down his cheeks. He was a young man, almost new to the game.

"I suppose those cars are all piled up, with a lot of hurt people under them," he said. "It's a good thing you're makin' time."

At the fireman's words Haywood's vision cleared. This run was different from any he had had in a long time. This was probably a worse wreck than any he had ever known. He had to do his best to get the wrecker over there. Yes, he had to do his best, even if he did burn himself up. What were his nerves compared to the suffering of those pinioned passengers?

He leaned forward, prepared to sac-

rifice himself. They came to a ten-mile stretch of track between McArthur and Quincy. The track was straightaway, and the roadbed was in good shape. Like a jockey hitting the stretch, Haywood urged his iron horse forward. He braced himself for the discovery that his outraged nerves were rebelling against the strain he was putting on them.

But he never made that discovery. Instead, a deep calm began to pervade him. He suddenly realized that this was the noblest task that had ever been set him. He must not only run his engine, but he must master himself. He must remain cool, so that he would lose nothing that alertness and care might gain for him.

"You better ease her off," Colton said. "We'll be there in a few minutes."

Haywood looked down. All the defiant triumph had died from Colton's face. Haywood saw that Colton, who had defeated him, stood himself defeated in this dire hour—that he was thinking of himself and not of the helpless people to whom they were taking aid.

"We're only halfway there," Haywood said. "I'll stop in time. The wreck is at the east switch."

Four miles were gone, with another mile to go. Haywood eased her off. Another half-mile, and a torpedo cracked beneath them. Haywood stopped. The flagman climbed up.

"You made time," he said. "We wasn't expectin' you for a while yet. Lord, it's fierce. I never want to go through this again."

A man came running toward the engine. Haywood recognized him as the trainmaster, arrived on the scene from the other direction. Half a dozen men carrying bags passed the engine from the rear. The trainmaster met them and turned back to the wreck with them.

"Well, we got some doctors here, anyway," Haywood said.

He moved forward slowly. He was very calm. He felt no elation over the run he had made, only a deep satisfaction that he had done what he could for some who suffered. And he was ready for whatever might be demanded of him through the trying hours that were ahead.

THE HEART OF A MAN

A NEW NOVEL BY HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES

Continued from page 757 of this issue.

ing pools in late sunlight—her laugh, her voice! He suddenly seemed to feel the actual touch of her hand in his, a tangible bodily presence.

"Marse Harry," said Jubilee Jim humbly, "dee ol' man don' know whuffoh yo' come hyuh dis time, er whuffoh yo' so long 'way f'om home. Ain' mah biz'ness, Ah knows. But dee mount'n ain' no place fo' folks tuh stay, 'cep'n' fo' ol' Jube, whut lib hyuh allus. En Marse Harry, down dah in dee city, ev'yone jes' waitin' en watchin' fo' yo'—Marse Brent, en—en dee pretty lady; en all!"

There was a long silence. At last Harry turned from the doorway.

"Thank you, Jube," he said in a low voice. "Now—tell me about Aunt Judy."

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE CALL

IN the big living-room, now flooded with the mountain sunshine that streamed in through the open door, Richard Brent leaned to knock the ashes from his pipe against the end of the hewn bench on which he sat. Then he looked up at Harry, standing in front of the empty fireplace.

"Well," he asked, "what do you think of it? How's that for a chance, eh?"

Harry nodded. One hand was tugging at his dark beard; the other was clasping and unclasping nervously behind him. "The new organization can't win, of course," he answered quietly. "Politically speaking, it's too young, and it lacks leaders. But it can make a strong showing, I should think."

Brent laughed as he explored his capacious tobacco-pouch. "Especially if the platform is built wide enough." He pointed to a newspaper lying beside him. "That editorial of mine hits the nail squarely on the head. There is one

issue, and only one, which will draw in all the elements opposed to the party that now rules—that is the liquor-issue. That *must* go in!"

A quick gleam crossed Harry's face. None but he knew what liquor had done for him; no eye but his might see the pitiful trail it had dragged across his life!

Brent laughed again. "It's strange that they don't see it!" he said. "Can't they deduce anything? Look at the growth of similar movements in other States. Do they really believe that any genuine good-government party can sit in the same saddle with John Barleycorn? That's why the thing has always failed in the past—compromise, temporize, fusion. Fiddlesticks! Why can't they take the bull by the horns? They would, too, if there was some one who would crystallize the thing in their minds." He shot a keen side-glance at Harry. "When you made that Civic Club speech last year," he said shrewdly, "I picked you for the Peter the Hermit of the new gospel. And then, confound it! you bury yourself in the wilds up here, while everyone thinks you've gone abroad, and I have to pack my rheumatic bones twenty miles on an infernal horse, to dig you out of your shell!"

Harry's eyes had been absently fixed on the spread-out newspaper. Something in the other's words, in his manner, caught him. A color came to his cheeks. "Dig me out of my shell?" he repeated. "What do you mean by that?"

Brent looked at him intently for a long second. During the past year he, like others, had wondered at his friend's long absence. At first he had put it down to natural need of vacation, and the other's failure to communicate with his friends had seemed significant of no more than the mild eccentricity

which had always flavored his actions. Only later the thought had come to him that Harry's absence might be due to an affair of the heart. This to him had pointed unerringly to Echo Allen, and conviction had leaped to a certainty on the day when he had seen her reception of Jubilee Jim's news of Harry's whereabouts.

The news of Harry's whereabouts, in his mind, had dovetailed with his knowledge of the political situation and its need of leadership, and the second day thereafter had found him on horseback, following the difficult trail to Harry's mountain eyrie. Now he had come to grips with his errand. He sat suddenly upright.

"Sevier," he said, "you've got to do it. You are the only one who can. You've got to speak at that convention on the seventeenth and nail that plank into the platform hard and fast!"

Harry made a quick gesture, then left the fireplace and began to stride up and down the room. During that silent, insistent gaze, a realization of what Brent intended to say came to him, with a glow of excitement. His heart was beating quickly, and a host of conflicting emotions were rioting in his mind. The allusion to his speech of a year ago had brought a throb of the old ecstasy of power—that power which he knew was his now, and in greater degree. If he only might use it for this good purpose!

Brent, looking at him, uncrossed his long legs with a smile. "I agree," he said, "that we may not be able to win, this time, but it will start it off right, and it will be a good fight. I'll bet you what you like that within a week—if that plank is rightly hammered in—the good-government clubs all over the State will be wiring allegiance!"

He got up, his lank, nervous figure braced with interest.

"And what if we do lose this governorship? It will be the first real nail in John Barleycorn's coffin in this State!"

Harry had sat down on the blanketed couch. His gaze went past the eager face before him and lingered on the sweet, warm world outside, with all its suggestions of new growth and virile

strength. But what he really saw was very far away. Was he a poor coward, then, to shrink from a woman's smile, a woman's eyes? He put his face in his hands. Possibilities were beckoning to him, dead things springing up alive, old longings, ambitions, appetencies, plucking at him.

For a time Brent did not speak. He had turned away and stood in the sunny doorway, looking down the trail. At length he faced about.

"Sevier," he said quickly, "what do you say? Will you do it?"

Harry looked up. The color had faded from his face, but it was alight with a new energy and resolution. The call had found him, and at that moment the harrowing dread—the problem itself, which had shone so imminent—seemed to have grown dim, to have drawn into the far distance.

"Yes," he answered slowly, "yes, Brent. I will come."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE CHALLENGE

LOOKING back upon that day, Harry was often to wonder whether, indeed he had missed fate's purpose, and blinded by a personal ambition, had set its plan at naught. For that instant's decision was to prove the key to a series of fateful doings which bore him on, irresistibly, into a line of action from which, deliberately, he must have shrunk.

But having set his hand, it was characteristic of him that he did not falter. It had required resolution to put Echo and his relations with her into the background, but he accomplished even this, and he allowed no thought of possible complications to affect his mental serenity. His face was composed and determined as he descended from the train at dusk of the sixteenth, at the familiar city station, to find—as Brent had arranged—his own motor waiting for him, with Bob, his chauffeur, wearing a broad grin of welcome, at its door. So pleasantly habitual it all seemed, so sharply remembered was each sight and sound as the car sped through the glimmering traffic, that almost he could have

believed the past year, full as it had been of pain, a vacuous dream, and that no hideous hiatus had lain between the then and the now.

He was sensible for the first time of the intense mental strain he had been laboring under since his sluggish prison routine had opened into this dubious freedom—the tension of his struggle, the instinct of impending catastrophe and the ghastly doubt of himself where Echo was concerned. The lassitude and inaction of the Bungalow had added to this strain. Now the relief of movement and action brought surcease, and a feeling of present confidence, if not of definite security. Before he reached his apartment he was sufficiently himself to give the welcome he received from Aunt Judy and from Suzuki a feeling of usualness.

Brent, with two or three others who saw eye to eye with him, so far as the exigencies of the political situation were concerned, spent a part of the later evening with him, and the talk furnished the final tonic—if any had been needed—to brace him for the task that awaited. That night, for the first time in many months, he slept the deep, fortifying sleep of utter and dreamless unconsciousness.

With the morning he felt no misgiving or shadow of self-doubt. By his express wish his arrival had not been published, and except for a few of its leaders with whom Brent had conferred, the circles of the convention, then in session in the biggest auditorium the city boasted, were no more aware than were the hosts of his friends, of his coming. He spent the morning alone in his room, sitting movelessly, hour after hour, marshaling his ideas, assembling his forces, stirred as he had never before been stirred by the quick suggestion of a living issue and of an unrivaled opportunity.

He lunched quietly alone with Brent in a private room at the club, and immediately afterward drove with him to the hall. Throughout the morning the platform had been under discussion; the debate was now about finished. It was the psychological moment for his effort.

AS Harry stood silent before the sea of faces, in the instant that followed his recognition and introduction, he was conscious of a tense and vital concentration that swept from him the last vestige of self-consciousness. With his first measured words, too, the outline which he had pondered during the morning vanished utterly from his brain. He remembered nothing save the one thing he had come to do, saw with his mind's eye only the monstrous evil against which he stood.

Words came to him in a flood—words magically compelling, that burned and quivered in their intense appeal. For an hour he held the interest of the great assembly as no orator had done, sketching with hard and pitiless directness the ramifications of the grim traffic that blasted whatsoever it touched, that knew no social bar, before which the magnate's mansion and the laborer's tenement were as one, against which no bolt or chain—save it be one wrought by the law of a sovereign commonwealth—might avail.

In his words was no tang of the study, none of the didactic methods of the armchair student, no array of statistics. What he expressed had been seared upon his soul in ineradicable letters; and as he spoke, vivid pictures etched themselves as if on some quivering panorama in his brain: he saw the black bottle in the wall-cabinet of his inner office—the hidden sanctuary where he had signed away his talent and linked his years to the demon of remorse; he saw the representative of the great corporations whose power flowed from that traffic, holding in his merciless hand the happiness of a woman who had been dearer than his own life; he saw the cringing hatred in the eyes of Paddy the Brick, the furtive, drink-lined faces of the jail corridors. And in his passionate denunciation, he called upon those who heard him to do their part to rid the State of its master and to set it free. Lastly, in a peroration which carried all before it, he pictured a community from which the unendurable stain had been forever wiped away, the pitfalls of its youth filled up, the shame of its prisons lightened—a community

ruled no longer by King Alcohol, but by the Genius of the Home, to which freedom no longer stood for ribald license and self-harm, but for the common good.

He stopped amid a dense silence—the truest tribute to real oratory; then with a great burst the storm of approval came.

It filled the hall with electric feeling, surging in waves that overtopped all decorum and made the hour significant and momentous. Near him Harry saw party leaders, among them Judge Allen, newly elected president of the Civic Club; they showed a singular self-assurance overlaid by vivid excitement. In the galleries were banks of feminine faces, tier on tier, merged in a tumultuous handclapping like silver rain. Below, the house was on its feet, a sea of waving flags and handkerchiefs.

The tumult swelled, then died away to pulsing band-music; and in the subsidence Brent leaned over Harry's shoulder to give him the quick pressure of a hand—words could not have said so much.

IT was not until the convention had adjourned for an hour's recess that Harry could escape from the congratulations that poured upon him where he sat. While he spoke, the sense of mastery and domination had possessed him; now he was feeling the inevitable revulsion, and with it came the fading of his confidence and the relifting of the old sickening question.

It had surged back before the applause had died away, the moment he had released his mind from the clamping resolution of his purpose, springing upon him like a cunning enemy who had dogged him in the shadow. His roseate speculations of the Bungalow seemed now but hollow wraiths that had mocked him with an unrealizable promise. Could he ever for a moment have cheated himself into forgetfulness of the *impasse* that lay there?

With Brent beside him, he pushed his way to the foyer. There the press was thickened, and they were blocked in a corner by the stream of people pouring from the galleries, from which posi-

tion Harry found himself nodding across to enthusiastic greetings of old acquaintances.

"Good heavens!" fumed Brent, impatiently. "We'll never get out, at this rate. Let's try the other door." Harry turned with him, seeking a way through the diminishing crowd. Then, abruptly, he stopped. Near at hand, her side-face turned toward him, was Echo. Her delicate color was heightened by an unwonted flush, and her eyes shone softly under the curling golden waves of her hair.

Gazing in a confusion that was almost panic, Harry felt, with a burning sense of helplessness and cowardice, the impossibility of his position. The sight of her was like a cooling stream to a famished wanderer in the desert. It called to him with a thousand voices, lifting before him every sweet reminder of vanished things. She had not yet seen him, and as the crowd swept her slowly closer, he felt to the full his own blindness and the egregious self-assurance that had made this plunge into the old current seem possible. He watched her with a fascinated intensity. She was speaking to some one beside her, her glance wandering. It shifted—then was raised, as if by very attraction, to his face.

He saw recognition spring across it like a shaft of sunlight as with a quick impulse she started forward; then her arm caught itself, as it were, half extended. He felt himself chill in every nerve; the air was breathless. Mechanically his hand touched hers.

"You have been gone a year," she said, in a low, uneven voice.

Harry's very thought seemed suspended. "Is it—so long?" he answered.

He scarcely knew what he said: the reply was a mere involuntary expression of habit, a conventional phrase to fill a casual need. He could not know that the very repression with which he was holding himself against the quick thrill of her touch made the words lifeless and inconsequential.

To Echo, however, in the tremulous gladness that had filled her at the knowledge of his return, and the exaltation of the hour, the reply deserved as at

heart she felt it to be, was like a blow in the face. A startled paleness swept up her cheeks like a wave, blotting their hue and misting the clear April of her eyes. She turned half away toward her companion, and the next moment the eddying crowd had come between.

ON the hurrying pavement Brent dropped his hand on Harry's shoulder. "I'm not going to congratulate you," he said. "I'm going to congratulate the new party. I'm off to the sanctum to write my editorial while it's red-hot. You'll come back for the other session, I suppose. They're liable to nominate to-night."

"No," replied Harry. "I must get away from the crowd somewhere."

Brent caught the lassitude of his tone. "Better walk yourself tired," he counseled, "and then turn in. You'll be all right to-morrow."

They clasped hands and parted.

For a time Harry walked aimlessly, choosing the less frequented thoroughfares, at last alone to think. He had done his best. Whether or not it would accomplish what Brent had hoped, he had made the strongest effort of which he was capable. The meeting with Echo had shaken him by its very unexpectedness, and had shown him how bitterly hard was to be his struggle with himself. In that instant of their encounter he had realized his own weakness.

Through the long, fading afternoon he walked on and on, past the outskirts of the city, on into the peaceful quiet of the country, where paved streets gave place to meandering red roads, and the air was sweet with the delicate fragrance of blossoming fruit-trees. He sat an hour on the violet-blurred grass above the bank of the little twisting river where he had often fished as a boy. All his life he had loved that gold-tinted, dream-shadowed valley. But now the soft, wild clamor of birds, the errant

plum-petals swinging in the breeze, the long-armed trees reaching out over the darkling water, called to him in vain. He scarcely saw the far blue hill-brushed horizon unfurl its pageant cloud-clusters to hide the sun.

What Spartan career had he been planning for himself? He loved her, desired her, still. He realized it with a stab of self-contempt. And loving her, could he see her day by day, meet her, talk with her—cold and empty words meaning less than nothing? With his heart crying to hers: "Thus far but no farther! Because I loved you once, I wear a shameful brand on my forehead, but my arms may never enfold you, your lips never lie on my lips, your heart beat against mine—never, never, never!" Could flesh and blood be capable of this? Better to go, while there was yet time, somewhere, anywhere, so it be out of her world! In the growing darkness he turned cityward again, still painfully absorbed with his thoughts—a dark tangle of anguish and doubt and longing.

As he neared his house, speeding urchins were crying newspaper extras, and more than once he heard his name in the shouted dislocated phrases. His speech! The swan's-song of Harry Sevier!

He let himself into his apartment with his latchkey and wearily switched on the lights. He suddenly remembered that he had eaten nothing since noon, and realized that he was wretchedly tired and spent. A penciled note, with the superscription in Brent's jerky hand, lay on the table. He took it up and opened it.

Then suddenly he gave an inarticulate cry of amaze—of actual fright. He was staring at this message, written an hour before:

Anti-liquor plank adopted. You were nominated for Governor on the first ballot at eight o'clock.

The next installment of "*The Heart of a Man*" will appear in the March Red Book Magazine—on sale February 23rd.

WE CAN'T HAVE EVERYTHING

A NEW NOVEL BY RUPERT HUGHES

Continued from page 668 of this issue.

She shook her head, but it hurt her to see the roll of bills he dived for and brought up, and the careless grace with which he peeled two leaves from the cabbage. Easy money is always attended with resentment that more did not come along. Kedzie pouted at her folly in not accepting the fifty. If she had said, "Lend me fifty," he would have offered her a hundred. But the twenty-five was salvation, and it would buy her food enough to keep her and her useless husband alive, and to buy her a pair of shoes and some gloves.

As the car drew near her corner, she cried that she had some shopping to do and escaped again at the drug-store. She did not want Ferriday to see where she lived and she did not want her husband to see her escort.

She found her husband at home. There was an unwonted authority about his greeting:

"Well, young woman, you may approach and kiss my hand. I am a gentleman with a job. I am a Chicago gentleman with a job."

"You don't mean it!" Kedzie gasped; and kissed him from habit with more respect than her recent habit had shown.

"I mean it," said Gilfoyle. "I am now on the staff of the Deshler Advertising Agency. I was afraid when Mr. D. offered me an unsolicited position (he could say it to-day) that it was the red wine and not the real money that was talking, but he was painfully sober this noon, took me out to lunch and told me that he would be proud to avail himself of my services."

"Splendid!" said Kedzie with sincere enthusiasm. It is always pleasant to learn that money is setting toward the family.

But something told Kedzie that her late acquisition of twenty-five dollars would not be with her long. Easy come, easy go. "How much is the fare to Chi-

cago?" she asked in a hollow voice.

"Twenty-two dollars is the fare," said Gilfoyle, "with about eight dollars extra. I couldn't borrow a cent. I've got only five dollars."

"I thought so," said Kedzie.

"Thought what so?" said Gilfoyle.

"Nothing," said Kedzie. "Well, I happen to have twenty-five dollars."

"That's funny," said Gilfoyle. "Where did you get it?"

"Oh, I saved it up."

"From what?"

"Well, do you want the twenty-five, or don't you?"

Gilfoyle pondered. If he questioned the source of the money he might find it out, and be unable to accept it. He wanted the money more than the hazardous information; so he said:

"Of course I want the twenty-five, darling, but I hate to rob you. Of course, I'll send for you as soon as I can make a nest out there, but how will you get along?"

"Oh, I'll get along," said Kedzie; "there'll be some movie-money coming to me Saturday."

"Well, that's fine," Gilfoyle said, feeling a weight of horrible guilt mingled with superior wings of relief. He hesitated, hemmed, hawed, perspired and finally looked to that old source of so many escapes, his watch.

"There's a train at eight-two; I could just about make it if I scoot now."

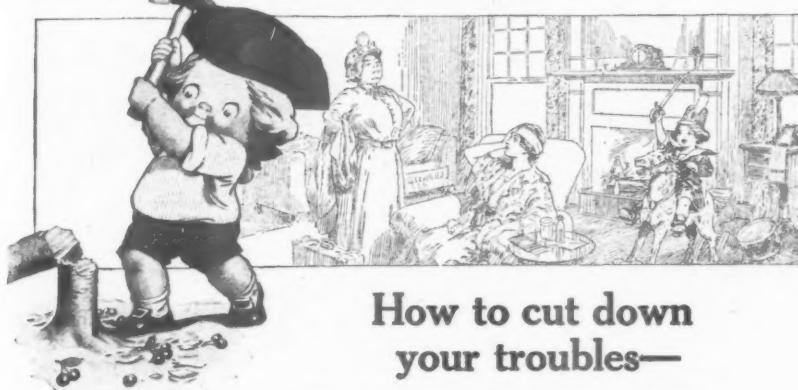
"You'd better scoot," said Kedzie. And she gave him the money.

"I'd like to have dinner with you," Gilfoyle faltered, "but—"

"Yes, I'd like to have you, but—"

They looked at each other wretchedly. Their love was so lukewarm already that they bothered each other. There was no impulse to the delicious bitter-sweet of a passionate farewell. She was as eager to have him gone as he to go, and each blamed the other for that.

"I'm G. Washington Campbell Kid
Cut down the worry-tree? Sure I did!"



How to cut down your troubles—

Strike at the root. Eliminate the *real* troubles—the big ones that cause all the others.

What causes those "splitting" headaches, that nervous indigestion, that "all gone" sensation when the day is only half over?

Isn't your *real* trouble too much worry over three meals a day?

Suppose your dinner had only half as many courses and one of them was a good nourishing soup like

Campbell's Tomato Soup

Wouldn't you be stronger? Wouldn't the "help" question be easier? Wouldn't the whole situation be simplified and brightened? Try it and see.

You gain more real body-building nutriment from such wholesome soup than from many dishes which are heavy and hard to digest and require a good deal of effort to prepare.

It supplies the readiest form of nourishment for all the body-tissues—not alone the flesh and muscles but the *nerves*. And you use up no nervous energy in preparing it. You do it easily in three minutes.

Have a good soup on your table every day. Keep a supply of these palatable Campbell "kinds" within easy reach, and cut down your troubles at the root.



Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

WE CAN'T HAVE EVERYTHING

"I'll write you every day," he said, "and I'll send the fare to you as soon as I can get it."

"Yes, of course," Kedzie mumbled. "Well, good-by—don't miss your train, darling."

"Good-by, honey."

They had to embrace. Their arms went out about each other and clasped behind each other's backs. Then some impulse moved them to a fierce clench of desperate sorrow. They were embracing their dead loves, the corpses that lay dead in these alienated bodies. It was an embrace across a grave, and they felt the thud of clods upon their love.

They gasped with the pity of it, and Kedzie's eyes were reeking with tears and Gilfoyle's lips were shivering when they wrenched out of that lock of torment.

He caught her back to him and kissed her salt-sweet mouth. Her kiss was brackish on his lips as life was. She felt a kind of assault in the fervor of his kiss but she did not resist. He was a stranger who sprang at her from the dark, but he was also very like a poet she had loved poetically long, long ago.

Then they wrung hands and called good-bys and he caught up his suit-case and rushed through the door.

She hung from the window to wave to him as he ran down the street to the subway, pausing now and again to wave to her vaguely, then stumbling on his course.

At last she could not see him, whether for the tears or for the distance, and she bowed her head on her lonely sill and wept.

She had a splendid cry that flushed her heart clean as a new whistle. She washed her eyes with fine cold water and half sobbed, half laughed:

"Well, that's over."

CHAPTER XXVI

WHEN Zada L'Etoile pretended to faint at the Ritz-Carlton, she thought she was doing a very clever thing. When she was safe in the motor outside, she told Cheever so.

"Some get-away, that?" she laughed.

"Wonderful," said Cheever. "I didn't know you had so much social skill."

"You don't know me," she said. "I'm learning! You'll be proud of me yet."

"I am now," he said. "You're the most beautiful thing in the world."

"Oh, that's old stuff," she said. "Any cow can be glossy. But I'm going in for the real thing, Peterkin. I've cut out the cocktails and I don't dance with anybody but you lately. Have you noticed that? It's the quiet life and the nice ways for me. Do you mind?"

"It's very becoming," he said. "Anything for a novelty."

Yet he liked her surprisingly well in this phase. She had been cutting down the liquor too. She had been cutting down his extravagances. She had even achieved the height of denying herself luxuries—one of the surest and least-trodden short-cuts to a man's heart—a little secret path he hardly knows himself.

The affair of Zada and Cheever was going the normal course. It had lost the charm of the wild and wicked—through familiarity; and it was tending to domestication as all such moods do if nothing interrupts them. There are all sorts of endings to such illicit relations: most of them end with the mutual treachery of two fickle creatures; some of them end with bitter grief for one or the other or both; some of them end in crime, or at least disgrace; and some of them finish, with disconcerting immorality, in an inexcusable respectability.

The improvement in Zada's mind and heart were, curiously, the most dangerous thing in the world for Cheever. If she had stayed noisy and promiscuous and bad, he would have tired of her. But she was growing soft and home-y, gentle as ivy and as hard to tear away or to want to tear away. After all, marriage is only the formalizing of an instinct that existed long before—exists in some animals and birds who mate without formality and stay mated without compulsion.

When Zada and Cheever had escaped from the Ritz-Carlton they took lunch at another restaurant. Zada was childishly proud of her tact and of Cheever's ap-

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Showro

"It's the same as June to us"

"We don't care how cold it is outside—our whole building is comfortable. The thermometer was 19 degrees below zero today, yet it was the same as June to us," writes a customer. This is the common experience of complete heating comfort that goes with these marvelous outfitts of



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constant physical strain of lugging coal, poking and coaxing the fire, fixing dampers and grates, or dumping ashes.

No corrosion, no repairs, no blackening, no annual storage! The consumption of fuel is automatically regulated—the rooms are kept at just the degree wanted—so no coal is wasted. IDEAL Boilers burn all local fuels, including the cheapest screenings, pea coal, lignite, wood and all grades of soft and hard coal.



A No. 4-19-W IDEAL Boiler and 390 sq. feet of 38-in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing the owner \$195, were used to heat this cottage. At this price the goods can be bought of any reputable competitor. This did not include cost of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which vary according to climatic and other conditions.

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In mild weather or in the midst of the most severe winter, AMERICAN-IDEAL heating is steadily on the job, without the

A lifetime of lowest heating cost!

Don't skimp on the heating; get IDEAL—the best there is—costs no more than inferior makes, due to our enormous annual output. Buildings thus equipped sell quicker, or bring 10% to 15% higher rental; or command a larger loan.

Why not decide at once to get this permanent *investment-heating?* Four months raw weather still ahead. Thousands of old buildings of all classes are equipped annually. Ask for "Ideal Heating" catalog (free)—full of big heating facts any owner or tenant should know. Write today. No urging to purchase.

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Ask for catalog of ARCO WAND Vacuum Cleaner. First genuinely practical Cleaner on market; is connected by iron suction pipe to all floors; and will last as long as your building.



preciation. But afterward on the way "home"—as she called what other people called her "lair"—she grew suddenly and deeply solemn.

"So your wife is with Dyckman again," she said. "It looks to me like a sketch."

Cheever flushed. He hated her slang and he did not accept her conclusion, but this time he did not forbid her to mention his wife. He could hardly do that when her tact had saved him and Charity from the results of their double indiscretion and the shame of amusing that room full of gossips.

Zada misunderstood his silence for approval; so she spoke her thoughts aloud:

"If that He and She business goes on, I suppose you'll have to divorce the lady."

"Divorce Charity!" Cheever gasped. "Are you dotty?"

That hit Zada pretty hard, but she bore it. She came back by another door.

"I guess I am—nearly as dotty as she is about Dyckman. First thing you know she'll be trying to get free herself. What if she asks you for a divorce?"

"I'd like to see her!"

"You mean you wouldn't give her her freedom?"

"Not in a thousand years."

He was astounded at the sepulchral woe of Zada's groan. "Oh Lord, and I thought—oh—you don't love me at all then! You never really loved me—really! God help me."

Cheever wondered what Zada would smash first. He hoped it would not be the window of the car. He hoped he could get her safely indoors before the smashing began.

He did. She was a grim and murky storm-cloud full of tornado when they crossed the pavement and the vestibule of the apartment-house and went up in the elevator.

But once inside the door, her breast began to heave, her nostrils to quiver, her fingers to work. Her maid came to take her hat, and paled to see her torment. Zada gave her her things and motioned her away. She motioned her four or five times. The maid had needed only one motion.

Cheever watched Zada out of the cor-

ner of his eye and wondered why he had ever been fated to fall in love with such a creature. He was convinced that he had been fate-forced into the intrigue. He had no sense, whatever, of volition or wicked intent. He could only feel that he had tried to be decent and play fair and be generous.

The thought of what the neighbors were about to receive made him sick with chagrin. The fact that the neighbors were under suspicion themselves only aggravated the burden of shame.

The hardest part of Zada's agony was her pitiful effort to take her medicine like a lady. It was terrific, how hard it was for one of a wildcat heritage and habit to keep the caterwaul back and the claws muffled. The self-duel nearly wrecked Zada, but she won it. She was not thoroughbred, but she had tried to be thorough-going. She was evidently not a success as a self-made lady. She kept whispering to herself:

"What's the use? Oh, why did I try? Oh, oh, oh, what a fool I've been! To think!—to think!—to think!"

Cheever was distraught. He had waited for the outbreak, and when it did not come, he suffered from the recoil of his own tension.

"For the Lord's sake, yell!" he implored.

She turned on him eyes of extraordinary abjection. She saw at last where her lawlessness had brought her and she despised herself. But she did not love him any the more for understanding him. She saw at last that one cannot be an honest woman without actually being—an honest woman. She was going to get honesty if it broke a bone.

She told her accomplice: "I want you to go away and stay away. Whatever you do, leave me be. There's nothing else you can do for me, except to take back all the stuff you've bought me. Give it to that wife you love so much and wouldn't suspect no matter what she did. You love her so much that you wouldn't let her go even if she wanted to leave you. So go back to her and take these things to her with my comp'ments."

Now it was Cheever who wanted to

What is the matter with my skin?

Examine your skin closely! Find out just the condition it is in. Then read below why you can change it and how.

HERE is why your complexion can be improved, no matter what is keeping it from being attractive now. Your skin, like the rest of your body, is changing every day. As old skin dies, new skin forms in its place.

This is your opportunity. By the proper external treatment you can make this new skin just what you would love to have it. Or—by neglecting to give this new skin proper care as it forms every day, you can keep your skin in its present condition and forfeit the charm of "a skin you love to touch." Which will you do? Will you begin at once to bring to your skin that charm you have longed for? Then begin tonight the treatment below best suited to the needs of your skin, and make it a daily habit thereafter.

To correct an oily skin and shiny nose

First cleanse your skin thoroughly by washing in your usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and warm water. Wipe off the surplus moisture, but leave the skin slightly damp. Now work up a heavy warm water lather of Woodbury's in your hands. Apply it to your face and rub it into the pores thoroughly—always with an upward and outward motion. Rinse with warm water, then with cold—the colder the better. If possible, rub your face for a few minutes with a piece of ice.

This treatment will make your skin fresher and clearer the first time you use it. Make it a nightly habit, and before long you will gain complete relief from the embarrassment of an oily, shiny skin.

To clear a blemished skin

Just before retiring, wash in your usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and warm water, finishing with a dash of cold water. Then dip the tips of your fingers in warm water and rub them on the cake of Woodbury's until they are covered with a heavy "soap cream." Cover each blemish with a thick coat of this. Let it dry and remain on overnight. In the morning wash in your usual way with Woodbury's.

If an oily skin and shiny nose is your bane, make the lather treatment a daily habit.



Whatever condition is keeping your skin from being beautiful, it can be changed!

Repeat this cleansing, antiseptic treatment every night until the blemishes disappear. Use Woodbury's regularly thereafter in your daily toilet. This will make your skin so strong and active that it will keep your complexion free from blemishes.

To whiten, sallow, freckled skins

Just before you retire, cleanse the skin thoroughly by washing in your usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and luke warm water. Wipe off the surplus moisture, but leave the skin slightly damp. Now dip the cake of Woodbury's in a bowl of water and go over your face and throat several times with the cake itself. Let this lather remain on overnight, and wash again in the morning with warm water, followed by cold, but no soap except that which has remained on the skin.

This treatment is just what your skin needs to whiten it. Use it every night unless your skin should become too sensitive, in which case discontinue until this sensitive feeling disappears. A few applications should show a marked improvement. Use Woodbury's regularly thereafter in your daily toilet and keep your skin in perfect health.

Woodbury's Facial Soap is the work of a skin specialist. A 25c cake is sufficient for a month or six weeks of any of these skin treatments. Get a cake today. It is for sale by dealers everywhere.

Send today for week's-size cake

For 4c we will send you a week's-size cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap. For 10c samples of Woodbury's Facial Soap, Facial Cream and Powder. Write today. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1702 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, O.

If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Ltd., 1702 Sherbrooke St., Perth, Ont.

A sallow, freckled skin will yield to this effective treatment described here.



Tear out this cake as a reminder to ask for Woodbury's today at your druggist's or toilet counter.

scream as he had not screamed since he was the purple-faced boy who used to kick the floor and his adoring nurse. But he had lost the safety valve of the scream. He smothered.

When Zada began to peel off her rings and thrust them out to him, he swiftly turned on his heel and fled. He never knew whether Zada woke the block with her howls or not, when he left her forever.

He forgot to ask, when he came back.

FIRST he went home to take his temper to Charity. On the way he worked up a splendid rage at her for giving such a woman as Zada grounds for gossip. He went straight to her room and walked in without knocking.

Charity was dictating a letter to her secretary. Cheever surprised a phrase before she saw him.

"Thousands of blind soldiers and thousands of orphans hold out their hands to us. We must all do what we can—" Why, hello! Where did you drop from? Give me just a minute while I finish this letter. Let me see. Where was I?"

The secretary read in a dull, secretarial voice:

"'Thousblinsoldiersorphs—wem'sdo'll we can.'"

"Oh, yes," said Charity. "'You have never failed to respond to such an appeal,' comma; no, semicolon; no, period. 'So I shall put you down for a subscription of' dash 'how much' question-mark. 'Thanking you in adv'—no, just say, 'My husband joins me in kindest regards to your dear wife and yourself, cordially yours'—and that will be all for the present."

The secretary garnered her sheaves and went out. Charity said to Cheever:

"Well, young man, sit down and tell us what's on your mind. But first, let me tell you my troubles. There's a match on my dresser there. Peter, I'm in an awful mess with this movie stunt. I can get plenty of people to pose for the camera, but I can't find a man to manage the business end of it. I was lunching with Mrs. Noxon at the Ritz to-day. I called your friend Jim Dyckman over from another table and begged him to

take the job. But he refused flatly, the lazy brute. Don't you think you could take it on? I wish you would. It's such a big chance to make a pile of money for those poor soldiers."

Cheever was lost. Unconsciously she had cleared up the scandal of her talk with Dyckman. He remembered that he had seen Mrs. Noxon at another table, standing. He felt like a dog and he wanted to fawn at the heels he had prepared to bite. He felt unworthy to be the associate of his sainted wife in her good works. He said:

"You flatter me. I couldn't manage a thing like that. I'm busy. I—I couldn't."

"You've got to play a part, then," she said. "You're looking so well nowadays, taking such good care of yourself. Will you?"

"I might," he said. "I'll think it over."

She was called to the telephone then and he escaped to his own room. He moped about and sulked in his uncomfortable virtue. He dressed for dinner with unusual care. He was trying to make a hit with his wife.

In going through his pocketbook, he came across two theater tickets. He had promised to take Zada. He felt like a low hound, both for planning to take her and for not taking her. She would have a dismal evening. And she was capable of such ferocious loneliness. He had driven away all her old friends. She would recall them, now, he supposed. That would be a pity, for they were an odious gang. It would be his fault if she relapsed. It was his duty, in a way, to help her to reform.

The ludicrous sublimity of such an ethical snarl reduced him to inanity. He stayed to dinner. Charity had not expected him to stop. She had planned an evening's excavation into her correspondence and had not changed her street dress. She was surprised and childishly delighted to have him with her—then childishly unhappy as she observed:

"But you're all togged up. You're going out."

"No—well—that is—er—I was thinking you would like to see a show. I've got tickets."

When the Rattlesnake Struck

Judge!

When you sent me up for four years, you called me a rattlesnake. Maybe I am one—anyhow, you hear me rattling now. One year after I got to the pen, my daughter died of—well, they said it was poverty and the disgrace together. You've got a daughter, Judge, and I'm going to make you know how it feels to lose one. I'm free now, and I guess I've turned to rattlesnake all right. Look out when I strike. Yours respectfully,
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"Cherchez la Femme."

THE GREEN
BOOK MAGAZINE

"But it's late. I'm not dressed."

"What's the odds? You look all right. There's never anybody but muckers there Saturday nights. We'll miss it all if you stop to prink."

"All right," she cried, and hurried through the dinner.

He was glad at least that he had escaped a solemn evening at home. He could not keep awake at home.

So they went to the theater; but there was not "nobody there," as he had promised.

Zada was there—alone in a box, dressed in her best, and wearing her East-Lynniest look of pathos.

The coincidence was not occult. After several hours of brave battle with grief and a lonely dinner, Zada had been faced by the appalling prospect of an evening alone.

She remembered Cheever's purchase of the theater tickets, and she was startled with an intuition that he would take his wife in her place. Men are capable of such indecent economies.

Zada was suffocated with rage at the possibility. She always believed implicitly in the worst things she could think of. If Peter Cheever dared do such a thing! And of course he would! Well, she would just find out!

She threw a lonely wineglass at the fern dish and smashed a decanter. Then she pushed off the table about a hundred dollars' worth of chinaware, and kicked her chair over backwards. She had been famous for her back-kick in her public dancing days.

She howled to her maid and went into her wardrobe with both hands. She acted like a windmill in a dress shop. Finally she came upon what she was looking for—the most ladylike theater-gown that ever combined magnificence with dazzling respectability.

She made up her face like a lady's—it took some paint to do that. Meanwhile, her maid was telephoning the theater for a box. Zada arrived before Cheever and Charity did. She waited a long time, haughtily indifferent to the admiration she and her gown were achieving. At last she was punished and rewarded, revenged and destroyed by the sight of Cheever coming down the aisle

with Charity. They had to pause to let a fat couple rise, and they paused facing Zada. Cheever caught her eye and halted petrified long enough for Charity to sit down, look up at him, follow the line of his gaze and catch a full blast of Zada's beauty and of the fierce look she fastened on Cheever. Charity's eyes ran back on the almost visible clothesline of that taut gaze and found Cheever wilting with several kinds of shame.

He sat down glum and scarlet, and Charity's heart began to throb. A second glance told her who Zada was. She had seen the woman often when Zada had danced in the theaters and the hotel ballrooms.

Charity found herself thinking that she was not Cheever's wife, but only a poor relation—by marriage. The worst of it was that she was not dressed for the theater. The gown she wore was exquisite in its place, but it was dull and informal and it gave her no help in the ordeal she was suddenly submitted to. Her hair had not been coiffed by the high-elbowed artist with the waving-tongs. Her brains were not marcelled for a contest of beauty with her rival. She was at her worst and Zada was at her supreme.

Zada was not entirely unknown to Charity. She had not been able to escape all the gossip that linked Cheever with her, but she had naturally heard little of it, and then only from people of the sort who run to their friends with all the bad news they can collect. They are easily discredited.

Charity had spent so many bad hours wondering at her husband's indifference and had heard his name linked with so many names, that she had temporized with the situation. Cheever was of the sort that looks at every woman with desire, or looks as if he looked so. The wives of such men grow calloused or quit them.

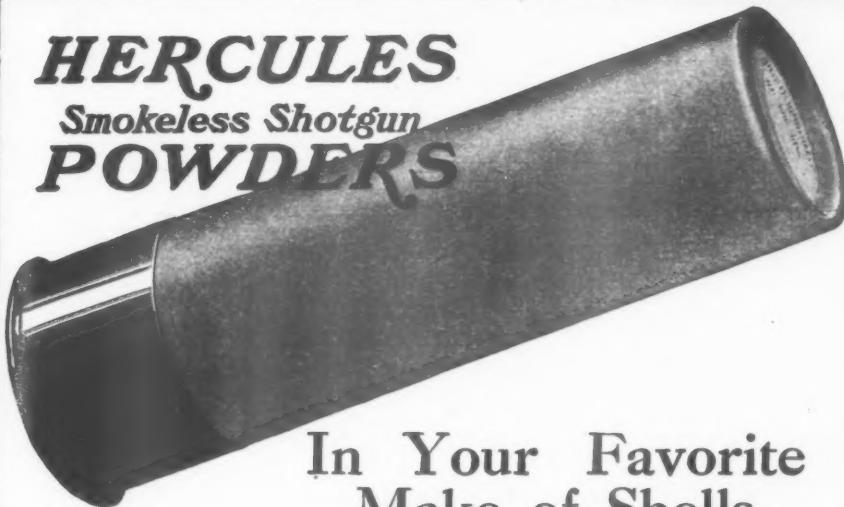
Charity had not quit Cheever. She had hardly dreamed of it. She had not outgrown being hurt. Her slow wrath had not begun to manifest itself. This crushing humiliation smote her from a clear sky.

She was not ready for it. She did not know what to do. She only knew, by

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long training, that she must not do what she first wanted to do. She had been taught from childhood what Zada was only now trying to learn.

Charity pretended a great interest in her program and laughed lightly. Cheever was morose. He stole glances at Zada and saw that she was in anguish. He felt that he had treated her like dirt. He was unworthy of her, or of his wife, or of anything but a horsewhip.

He glanced at Charity and was fooled by her casual chatter. He supposed that she was as ignorant of the affair with Zada as he wanted her to be. He wished that he could pretend to be unconcerned, but he could not keep his program from shivering; his throat was full of phlegm; he choked on the simplest words. He thought for some trick of escape, a pretended illness, a remembered business engagement, a disgust with the play.

He was afraid to trust his voice to any proposal or even to go out between the acts.

The worst of it was that he felt sorrier for Zada than for his wife. Poor Zada had nothing. Charity had everything. How easily we vote other people everything! Cheever was afraid of the ride home with Charity; he dreaded to be at home to-night and to-morrow and always. He longed to go to Zada and help her and let her revile him and scratch him, perhaps, provided only that she would throw her arms about him afterwards. He never imagined that a duel of self-control, a mortal combat in refinement, was being fought over him by those two women.

Zada's strength gave out long before Charity's; she was newer to the game. During a dark scene she surrendered the field and decamped. But Cheever and his wife both caught the faint shimmer of her respectable robe as it floated from the rail and vanished in the curtains. It was like a de-materialization at a séance.

Cheever wanted to crane his neck and dared not. Charity felt a great withdrawal of support in the flight of her rival. She had not Zada's presence now to sustain her through the last act. But she sat it out.

She was bitter against Cheever, and her thoughts dark. The burden of his

infidelity was heavy enough for her to bear, but for him to subject her to such a confrontation was outrageous. She had no doubt that it was a cooked-up scheme. That vile creature had planned it and that worm of a husband had consented to it!

The most unforgivable thing of all, of course, was the clothes of it.

Charity, in the course of time, forgave nearly everybody everything, but she never forgave her husband that.

On the way home she had nothing to say. Neither had Cheever. He felt homesick for Zada. Charity felt homeless. Since those nameless people in the theater knew of Cheever's disloyalty, the whole world must be aware of it. She must have been the laughing-stock or the pitying-stock of the whole world for a long time.

When they reached home, she bade Cheever a perfectly cheerful good night and left him to a cold supper the butler had laid out for him. She did not know that he stole from the house and flew to Zada.

Charity was tempted to an immediate denunciation of Cheever and a declaration of divorce. She would certainly not live with him another day. That would be to make herself an accomplice, a silent partner of Zada's. It would be intolerable, immoral, not nice.

The next morning proved to be a Sunday and she felt a need of spiritual help in her hour of affliction. Man had betrayed her; religion would sustain her grim determination to end the unwholesome condition of her household. The Bible said (didn't it?): "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." That surely meant: "If thy husband offend thee, divorce him."

She went to church, her ancestral Episcopalian church, where her revered Dr. Mosely, the kindest old gentleman in the world, had poured sermons down at her like ointment and sent prayers up like smoke since she was a little girl. But on this day he chose to preach a ferocious harangue against divorce as the chief peril, the ruination of modern society.

The cowering Charity got from him the impression that home-life had always

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Can you answer a letter of complaint so as to satisfy the complainant and yet preserve ? the firm's prestige

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been flawless in this country until the last few years, when divorce began to prosper, and that domestic life in countries where there is little or no divorce had always been an unmitigated success. If only divorce and remarriage were ended, the millenium of our fathers would return.

This had not been her previous opinion; it was her vivid impression from Dr. Mosely, as honest an old darling as ever ran facts through a sieve and threw away all the big chunks that would not go through the fine mesh of his prejudices. He abhorred falsehood, cruelty, skepticism, sectarianism and narrowness, and his sermons were unconscious mixtures of hand-picked truth and eloquent legends, ruthless denunciations of misunderstood people and views, atheism toward the revelations of all the sciences (particularly the science of Biblical criticism, which he hated worse than Haeckel), and a narrowness that kept trying to sharpen itself into a razor edge.

Fortunately he belied in his life almost all of his pulpit crimes and moved about, a tender, chivalrous, lovable old gentleman. It was this phase that Charity knew, for she had not heard one of his sermons for a year or more, though she saw him often in his parish work. She was the more amenable to his pulpit logic to-day.

Charity had always assumed that the United States was the most virtuous, enlightened and humane of nations. According to Dr. Mosely, it was shockingly corrupt, disgusting. The family as an institution was almost completely gone; its only salvation would be an immediate return to a divorceless condition. (Like that of Italy and Spain and France during the Middle Ages?)

Hitherto Charity had not thought much about divorce, except to regret that certain friends of hers had not hit it off better and had had to undergo cruel notoriety after their private distresses. But divorce was no longer an academic question to her. It had come home.

When she realized that her husband had been not only neglectful of her but devoted to a definite other woman, she felt at first that it would be heinous to receive him back in her arms fresh from

the arms of a vile creature like Zada L'Etoile. Now she got from the pulpit the distinct message that just this was her one important duty, and that any attempt to break from such a triple yoke would be a monstrous iniquity which the church could not condone.

Dr. Mosely implied that when one partner to a marriage wandered aside into forbidden paths (as he very prettily phrased the very ugly matter), it was always the fault of the other partner. He thundered that the wives of to-day were not like their simple-minded mothers, because they played bridge and smoked cigarettes and did not attend prayer meetings and would not have children. It was small wonder, he said, that their husbands could not be held. Dr. Mosely had preached the same sermon at Charity's mother and her generation, and his father had preached it at his generation, with the necessary terms changed and the spirit the same. He and his kind had been trying since time began to cure the inherent ills of human relationships by railing at them and calling them new.

So in the dark ages the good priests had tried to cure insane people by shouting denunciations at the devils that inhabited them. The less they cured, the louder they shouted, and when the remedy failed they blamed the patients.

So fathers try to keep their little sons from being naughty and untruthful by telling them how good and obedient little boys were when they were little boys. They tell a silly lie to rebuke a lie and wonder at their non-success.

Marital unrest is no more a sign of wickedness than stomach-ache is; it is a result of indigestion or ptomaine poisoning, and divorce is only a strong purge or an emetic, equally distressing and often the only remedy.

But Dr. Mosely honestly abominated divorce; he regretted it almost as much as he regretted the Methodist Episcopal heresies or the perverseness of the low-church doctrines.

Charity had always been religious; she had wrecked her health visiting the sick and cherishing the orphan and she had believed everything she was told to believe. But now when she went to

church for strength and comfort, she came away feeling herself a condemned and branded failure, blameworthy for all her husband's sins and sins of her own that she had not suspected.

She prayed to be forgiven for causing her husband to sin and asked strength to win him back to his duty. She reached home in such a mood of holy devotion that when she found her husband there she bespoke him tenderly and put out her arms to him and moaned:

"Forgive me!"

"For what?" he said as he went to her from habit before he could check himself. But even as he clasped her, she felt that his very sleeves were warm from Zada L'Etoile's embrace and she slipped through his arms to the floor.

When she came to, she was lying on a couch with a cushion under her heels, and Cheever was chafing her wrists and kissing her hand. She drew it away feebly and said:

"Thank you. I'll be all right. Just leave me alone."

He remembered that Zada had said much the same thing. He was glad to leave the room. When he had gone, Charity got up and washed her hands, particularly the hand, particularly the spot, he had kissed.

She seemed to feel that some of the rouge from Zada's lips had been left there by Cheever's lips. There was a red stain there and she could not wash it away. Perhaps it was there because she tried so hard to rub it off. But it tormented her as she went sleep-walking, rubbing her hand like another *Lady Macbeth*.

CHAPTER XXVII

WHILE Charity was watching the tearing down of her life, Kedzie Thropp was building herself a new one on the foundations that Charity had laid for her with a card of introduction to Miss Havender.

In the motion-picture world Kedzie had found herself. Her very limitations were to her advantage. She would have failed dismally in the spoken drama, but the photograma was just to her measure.

The actor must not only know how to read his lines and express emotions, but must keep up the same spontaneity night after night, sometimes for a thousand performances or more. The movie actor is expected to respond to a situation once or twice for rehearsal, and once or twice for the camera. There is no audience to struggle against and listen for—and to. The director is always there at the side calling, reminding, pleading, encouraging, threatening, suggesting the thoughts, the lines and the expression, doing all the work except the pantomime.

That was Kedzie's salvation. Tell her a story and make her the heroine of it, and her excitable heart would thrill to the emotional crisis. Take a snapshot of her, and the picture was caught.

Ferriday soon learned this and protected her from her own helpless vice of discontent. She lapsed always from her enthusiasm after it was once cold.

Movie life was just the thing for her. She did not play always the same set scenes in the same scene-sets. She was not required even to follow the logic of the story. For a while she would act a bit in a tiny angle representing a drawing-room. When that was taken, she would play, not the next moment of the story but the next scene in that scene. It might be a year further along in the story. It was exciting.

Her first picture had great success. She played a girl brought up as a boy by a cruel Italian padrone who made her steal. Her second picture was as nearly the same as possible.

One's own portrait is always a terribly fascinating thing, for it is always the inaccurate portrait of a stranger curiously akin to one and curiously alien. But to see one's portrait move and breathe and feel is magic unbelievable.

In the enlarged close-ups, Kedzie loved herself and was glad of the friendly dark that hid her own wild pride in her beauty, but this did not prevent her from hearing the exclamations of Ferriday and the backers, and the other actors who were admitted to the preliminary views.

There was a quality in her work that surpassed Ferriday's expectations and



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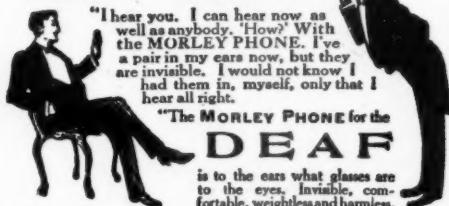


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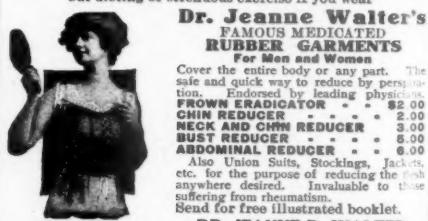
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IT took time, however, to get Kedzie from the studio to the negative, then to the positive. There was editing to do, and it seemed to her that her most delicious bits had to be cut out, because Ferriday always took three or four thousand feet of film for every thousand he used. They had to cut out more Kedzie to let in the titles and subtitles, and it angered her to see how much space was given to other members of the cast. She simply loathed the scenes she was not the center of, and she developed an acerbity of protest against any "trespass" on her "rights" that proved her a genuine business woman.

She learned the tricks of the trade with magnificent speed. She was never so meek and helpless of expression as when she slipped in front of another actor or actress and filled as much of the foreground as her slenderness permitted. In the studio she was speedily recognized as an ambitious young woman, zealous for self-advancement. In fact, they called her a "reel-hog" and a "glutton for footage." A number of minor feuds were turned into deep friendships through a common resentment at Kedzie's impartial robberies.

Ferriday delighted in Kedzie's battle for space with the other members of the troupe. They kept everybody intense. The lover loved her better on the screen for hating her personal avarice. Her mother in the picture was more meltingly tender in her caresses for wanting to scratch the little cat's eyes out. The clergyman who pointed her the way to heaven grew more ardently devout for having to grip the floor with his feet to keep the adoring Kedzie from edging him off his own pulpit.

This rivalry is better than any number of chaperons and Kedzie was saved from

any danger of falling in love with the unspeakably beautiful leading man by the ferocity of her rivalry with him.

With Ferriday, Kedzie's relations were more perilous. He had invented her and was patenting her. She dreaded his wisdom and accepted his least theory as gospel—at first. He combined a remote and godlike intellect with a bending and fatherly grace. And now and then, like the other gods of all the mythologies, he came down to earth in an amorous mood.

Now Kedzie's surety was her canny realization of the value of tantalism. She was not long left in ignorance of his record for flitting fancy and she felt that he would flit from her as soon as he conquered her. Her duty was plain.

She played him well and drove him frantic. It would have been hard to say whether he hated her or loved her more when he found her always just a little beyond. He had begun with the greatest gift in his power. He had promised her world-wide fame, and no other gift could count till he had made that good. And it would take a long, long while of incessant labor to build.

Ferriday belittled himself in Kedzie's eyes by his groans of baffled egotism. She could read his plots on his countenance, and thwart him in advance. But this was not always easy for her, and again and again he had only himself to blame for his non-success with Kedzie's heart. With Kedzie's fame he was having a very sudden and phenomenal triumph—if anything could be called phenomenal in a field which itself was phenomenal always.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FERRIDAY did not know, of course, that Kedzie was married. She hardly knew it herself now. Gilfoyle had been three weeks late in sending her the thirty dollars fare to Chicago. Then she wrote him that she was doing fairly well at the studio and she would stick to her work. She sent him oceans of love, but she did not send him the thirty dollars.

Besides, he had borrowed it of her in the first place, and she had had to borrow more of Ferriday. She neglected to pay

WE CAN'T HAVE EVERYTHING

Ferriday back. She needed so much for her new clothes and new expenses innumerable inflicted on her by her improved estate.

And, of course, she left the miserable little flat on the landlord's hands. He wasted a good deal of time trying to get the rent paid. But it was rented in Gilfoyle's name and he was safe in Chicago. And yet not very safe, for Chicago has also its Bohemia, its clusters of real and imitation artists, its talkers and dabblers as well as its toilers and achievers.

When Gilfoyle got Kedzie's letter saying that she would not join him yet awhile, he wrote her a letter of poetic grief at the separation. But poets, like the rest of us, are the better for getting a grief on paper and out of the system.

Kedzie did not answer his letter for a long while and he did not miss her answer much, for he was having his own little triumphs. The advertisements he wrote were receiving honorable mention at the office and he was having success with his poetry and his flirtations of evenings.

He returned to his boarding-house one night and looked at his face in the mirror, stared into the eyes that stared back. A certain melting and molten and molting lady had told him that he had poet's eyes like Julian Street's and was nearly as witty. Gilfoyle tried with his shaving glass and the bureau mirror to study the profile that some one else had compared to the cameonic visage of Richard Le Gallienne.

Gilfoyle was gloriously ashamed of himself. In the voice that some one else had compared to Alfred Noyes' reading, he addressed his reflection with scorn:

"You heartless dog! you ought to be shot—forgetting that you have a poor little deserted wife toiling in the great city. You're as bad as Lord Byron ever was."

Then he wrote a sonnet against his own perfidy and accepted confession as atonement and plenary indulgence.

He was one of those who when they have cried "I have sinned," hear a mysterious voice saying, "Poor sufferer, go and sin some more."

So he did and he went the way of millions of lazy-minded, lazy-moraled hus-

bands, while Kedzie went the way of men and women who succeed by self-exploitation and count only that bad morals which is also bad business.

And that was the status of the matrimonial adventure of the Gilfoyles for the present. It made no perceptible difference to anybody that they were married,—least of all to themselves,—for the present. But of course Kedzie was obscurely preparing all this while for a tremendous explosion into publicity and into what is known as "the big money." And that was bound to make a vast difference to Gilfoyle as well as to Mrs. Gilfoyle.

In these all-revolutionary days a man had better be a little polite always to his wife, for in some totally unexpected way she may suddenly prove to be a bigger man than he is, a money-getter, a fame- or shame-acquirer—if only by way of becoming the president of a suffrage association or a best seller or an inventor of a popular doll.

AND all this time—a very short time, considering the changes it made in everybody concerned—Ferriday was Kedzie's alternate hope and despair, good angel and bad, lifter and down-yanker.

Sometimes he threatened to stop the picture and destroy it unless she kissed him. And she knew that he could and would do almost anything of that sort. At such times Kedzie usually kissed Ferriday to keep him quiet. But she was as careful not to give too many kisses as she had been not to put too many caramels in half a pound when she had clerked in the little candy-store. Nowadays she would pause and watch the quivering scale of policy intently with one more sweet poised as if it were worth its weight in gold. The ability to stop while the scale wavers in the tiny zone of just-a-little-too-little and just-a-little-too-much is what makes success in any business of man or womankind.

It was not always easy for Kedzie to withhold that extra bonbon. There were times when Ferriday raised her hopes and her pride so high that she fairly squealed with love of him and hugged him. That would have been the de-



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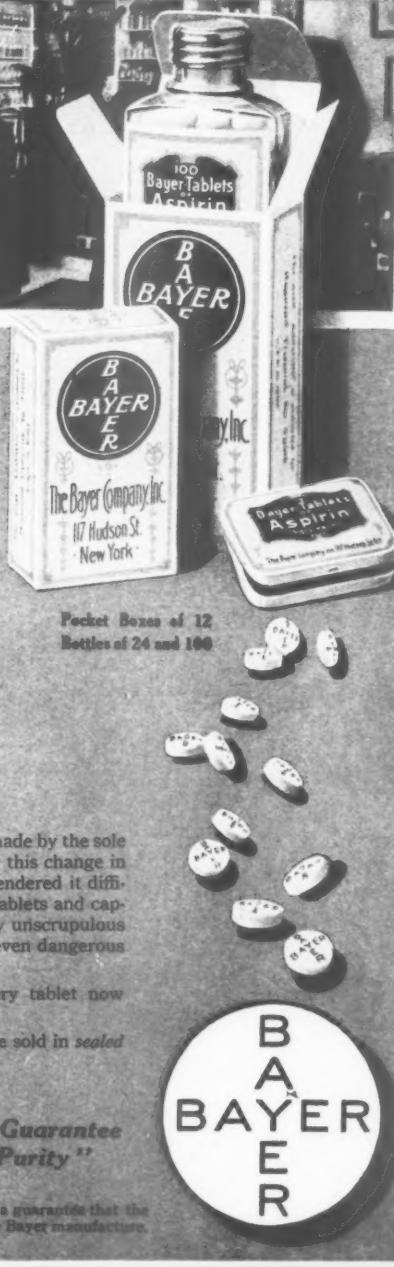
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struction of Kedzie if there had not been the counterweight of conceit in Ferriday's soul, for at those times he would sigh to himself or aloud:

"You are loving me only because I am useful to you."

This thought always sobered and chilled Mr. Ferriday. He worked none the less for her and himself and he tried in a hundred ways to surprise the little witch into an adoration complete enough to make her forget herself, make her capable of that ultimate altruism to which a woman falls or rises when she stretches herself out on the altar of love.

Ferriday began to think seriously that the only way he could break Kedzie's pride completely would be to make her his wife. He began to wonder if that were not after all what she was driving at—or trying to drive him to.

Life will be so much more wholesome when women propose marriage as men do and have a plain, frank talk about it instead of their eternal business of veils and reticences, fugitive impulses real or coquettish, modesties real or faked.

Ferriday could not be sure of Kedzie, and he grew so curious to know that finally he broke out:

"In the Lord's name, will you or will you not marry me, damn you?"

And Kedzie answered:

"Of course not. I wouldn't dream of such a thing."

But that did not prove anything, either. Perhaps she merely wanted to trawl him along.

She had Ferriday almost crazy—at least she had added one more to his manias—when Jim Dyckman wandered into the studio and set up an entirely new series of ambitions and discontents.

CHAPTER XXIX

WHEN Charity Coe had asked Jim Dyckman to become the business manager of the movie stunt and go to the Superfilm Studio, he had answered her:

"Go to the devil, Charity darling. You won't let me love you, so I'll be cussed if I'll let you get me to working for you. I've had you bad and I'm trying to get well of you. So let me alone."

That was the day that Zada saw Jim and Charity together and pretended to be faint.

Charity did leave Jim alone and she forgot the whole enterprise for a time in the agony of her discovery that her husband was disloyal and that the church did not accept that as a cancellation of her own loyalty.

For a long time she was in such misery of uncertainty that she put off the moving-picture scheme and went up to the mountains to recover her strength. She came back at last made simple and stoical somehow by the contrast of human pettiness with the serenity (as we call it) of those vast masses of débris that we poetize and humanize as patient giants.

Her absence had left Cheever entirely to his own devices and to Zada's. They had made up and fought and made up again dozens of times and settled down at length to that normal alternation of peace and conflict known as domestic life.

With Charity out of the way there was so little interruption to their communion that when she came back Zada forbade Cheever to meet her at the station, and he obeyed.

Charity felt that she had brought with her the weight of the mountains instead of their calm when she detrained in the thronged solitude of the Grand Central terminal. And the house with its sympathetic family of servants only was as homelike as the Mammoth Cave.

She took up her work with a frenzy. The need of a man to act as her adjutant in the business details was imperative. She thought of Jim Dyckman again, and with a different thought.

When he pleaded to her before, she had imagined that she was at least officially a wife. Now she felt divorced and abandoned, a waif on the public mercy.

She wanted to talk to Jim, because she felt so disprized and downtrodden that she wanted to see somebody who adored her. She felt wild impulses to throw herself into his keeping. She wanted to be bad just to spite the bad. But she merely convinced herself that she was wicked enough already and deserving of her punishment.

She made the moving-picture scheme a good excuse for asking Jim to grant her a talk—a business talk. To protect herself from him and from herself she made a convenience of Mrs. Neff's home. Jim met here there. She was not looking her best and her mood was one of artificial indirectness that offended him. He never dreamed that it was because she was afraid to show him how glad she was to see him.

He was furious at her—so he said he would do her bidding. She dumped the financial and mechanical ends of the enterprise on his hands and he accepted the burden. He had nothing else pressing for his time.

One of his first duties, Charity told him, was to call at the Superfilm Studio and try to engage that Mr. Ferriday for director and learn the ropes.

"While you're there, you might inquire about that little girl you pulled out of the pool. I sent her there. They promised her a job. Her name was—I have it at home in my address-book. I'll telephone it to you."

And she did. She had no more acquaintance with the history Kedzie was making in the moving-picture world than she had of the sensational rise of the latest politician in Tibet. Neither had Jim.

He had been traveling about on his mother's yacht and in other less correct societies, trying to convince himself that he was cured of Charity. He did not know that the first pictures of Anita Adair were causing lines to gather outside the moving-picture theaters of numberless cities and towns—including the little theater in Nimrim, Mo., and many little and big theaters in Chicago.

WHEN his car halted before the big studio where Ferriday was high priest, Jim might have been a traveler entering a temple in Lassa, for all he knew of its rites and its powers.

No more did the doorman know the power and place of Jim Dyckman. When Jim said he had an appointment with Mr. Ferriday, the doorman thumbed him up the marble stairs. There were many doors but no signs on them and Dyckman blundered about.

At length he turned down a corridor and found himself in the workshop.

A vast room it was, the floor hidden with low canvas walls and doors marked "Keep out." Overhead were girders of steel from which depended heavy chains supporting hundreds of slanting tubes glowing with green fire.

From somewhere in the enclosures came a voice in distress. It was the first time Dyckman ever heard Ferriday's voice, and it puzzled him as it cried:

"Come on, choke her—choke harder, you fool; you're not a masseur—you're a murderer. Now drag her across to the edge of the well. Pause, look back. Come on, Melnotte: yell at him! Stop, stop, you dog. Turn round, Higgins; draw your knife. Go to it now! Give 'em a real fight. That's all right. Only a little cut. The blood looks good. Get up, Miss Adair; crawl away on hands and knees. Don't forget you've been choked. Now take the knife away, Melnotte. Rise; look triumphant; see the girl. Get to him, Miss Adair. Easy on the embrace: you're a shy little thing. 'My hero! you have saved me!' Now Melnotte: 'Clarice! it is you! you!' Cut! How many feet, Jones?"

"Now we'll take the scene in the vat of sulphuric acid. Is the tank ready? You go lie down and rest, Miss Adair. We won't want you for half an hour."

As Kedzie left the scene, she found Dyckman waiting for her. He lifted his hat and spoke down at her:

"Pardon me, but you're Miss Adair, aren't you?"

"Yes," said Kedzie with as much modesty as a queen could show, incidentally noting that the man who bespoke her so timidly was plainly a real swell. She was getting so now that she could tell the real from the plated.

"I heard them murdering you in there and I—well, Mrs. Cheever asked me to look you up and see how you were getting along. I see you are."

"Mrs. Cheever!" said Kedzie, searching her memory. Then with great kindness: "Oh, yes, I remember her."

"You've forgotten me, I suppose. I had the pleasure—the sad pleasure of helping you out of the water at Mrs. Noxon's."

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"Oh, Lord, yes," Kedzie cried, forgetting her rank. "You're Jim Dyckman—I mean, Mr. Dyckman."

"So you remember my name," he flushed. "Well, I must say!"

"I didn't remember to thank you," said Kedzie: "I was all damp and mad. I've often thought of writing to you." And she had.

"I wish you had," said Dyckman. "Well, well!"

He didn't know what to say, and so he laughed and she laughed and they were well acquainted. Then he thought of a good one.

"I pulled you out of the cold water, so it's your turn to pull me out of the hot."

"What hot?" said Kedzie.

"I've been sent up here to learn the trade."

Kedzie had a horrible feeling that he must have lost his money. Wouldn't it be just her luck to meet her first millionaire after he had become an ex-?

But Dyckman said that he had come to try and engage Mr. Ferriday, and that sounded so splendid to Kedzie that she snuggled closer. Ordinarily when a woman cowers under the eaves of a man's shoulder it is taken for a signal for amiabilities to begin.

Dyckman could not imagine that Kedzie was already as bad as all that. She wasn't. She was just trying to get as close as she could to a million dollars. Her feelings were as innocent and as imbecile as those of the mobs that stand in line for the privilege of pumping a politician.

Jim Dyckman kept forgetting that he was so rich. He hated to be reminded of it. He did not suspect Kedzie of such a thought. He stared down at her and thought she was cruelly pretty. He wanted to tell her so, but he found himself saying:

"But I mustn't keep you. I heard somebody say that you were to lie down and rest up."

"Oh, that was only Mr. Ferriday. I'm not tired a bit."

"Ferriday. Oh yes, I'm forgetting him. He's the fellow I've come to see."

"He can't be approached when he's working. Sit down, wont you?"

He sat down on an old bench and she sat down too. She had never felt quite so contented as this. And Dyckman had not felt so teased by beauty in a longer time than he could remember.

Kedzie was as exotic to him as a Japanese doll. Her face was painted in picturesque blotches that reminded him of a toy-shop. Her eyes were made up with a delicate green that gave them an effect unknown to him.

She was dressed as a young farm girl with a sunbonnet a-dangle at the back of her neck, her curls trailing across her rounded shoulders and down upon her dreamy bosom. She sat and swung her little feet and looked up at him sideways.

He forgot all about Ferriday, and when Ferriday came along did not see him. Kedzie did not tell him. She pretended not to see Ferriday, though she enjoyed enormously the shock it gave him to find her so much at ease with that big stranger.

Ferriday was so indignant at being snubbed in his own domain by his own creation that he sent Garfinkel to see who the fellow was and throw him out. Garfinkel came back with Dyckman, followed by Kedzie.

Before Garfinkel could present Dyckman to the great Ferriday, Kedzie made the introduction. Dyckman was already her own property. She had seen him first.

Ferriday was jolted by the impact of the great name of Dyckman. He was restored by the suppliant attitude of his visitor. He said that he doubted if he could find the time to direct an amateur picture. Dyckman hastened to say:

"Of course, money is no object to us—"

"Nor to me," Ferriday said coldly.

Dyckman went on as if he had not heard: "—Except that the more the show costs the less there is for the charity."

"I should be glad to donate my services to the cause," said Ferriday, who could be magnificent.

"Three cheers for you!" said Dyckman, who could not.

Ferriday had neither the time nor the patience for the task. But when the

chance came to dazzle the rich by the rich generosity of working for nothing, he could not afford to let it pass. To tip a millionaire! He had to do that.

He saw incidentally that Kedzie was fairly hypnotized by Dyckman and Dyckman by her. His first flare of jealousy died out. To be cut out by a prince has always been a kind of ennoblement in itself.

Also one of Ferriday's inspirations came to him. If he could get those two infatuated with each other, it would not only take Kedzie off his heart, but it might be made to redound to the further advantage of his own genius. A scheme occurred to him. He was building the scenario of it in the back room of his head while his guest occupied his parlor.

He wanted to be alone and he wanted Dyckman and Kedzie to be alone together and so did Kedzie. Ferriday suggested:

"Perhaps Mr. Dyckman would like to look over the studio—and perhaps Miss Adair would show him about."

Kedzie started to cry, "You bet your boots," but she caught herself in time and shifted to "I should be chawmed." Millionaires did not use plain words. Then Dyckman said:

"Great!"

He followed Kedzie wherever she led. He was as awkward and out of place as a schoolboy at his first big dance. Kedzie showed him a murder scene being enacted under the bluesome light. She took great pains not to let any of it stain her skin. She showed him a comic scene with a skeletal man on a comic bicycle. Dyckman roared when the other comedian lubricated the cyclist's joints with an oil can.

Kedzie showed him the projection-room and told the operator to run off a bit of a scene in which she was revealed to no disadvantage. She sat alone in the dark with a million dollars that were crazy about her. She could tell that Dyckman was tremendously excited.

Here at last was her long-sought opportunity to rebuff the advances of a wicked plutocrat. But he didn't make any, and she might not have rebuffed them. Still, the air was aquiver with that electricity generated almost audibly

by a man and a woman alone in the dark.

Dyckman was ashamed of himself and of his arm for wanting to gather in that delectable partridge, but he behaved himself admirably.

He told her that she was a "corker," a "dream," and "one sweet song," and that the picture did not do her justice.

Kedzie showed him the other departments of the picture factory and he was amazed at all she knew. So was she. He stayed a long while and saw everything and yet he said he would come again.

He suggested that it might be nice if Mr. Ferriday and Miss Adair would dine with him soon. Ferriday was free "to-morrow," and so they made it to-morrow evening at the Vanderbilt.

Kedzie was there and Dyckman was there, but a boy brought a note from Mr. Ferriday saying that he was unavoidably prevented from being present.

Dyckman grinned:

"We'll have to bear up under it the best we can. You won't run away just because your chaperon is gone, will you?"

Kedzie smiled and said she would stay, but she was puzzled. What was Ferriday up to? One always suspected that Ferriday was up to something and thinking of something other than what he said.

KEDZIE was not ashamed of her clothes this time. Indeed, when she gave her opera cloak to the maid, she came out so resplendent that Jim Dyckman said:

"Zowie! but you're a—whew, aren't you great? Some change-o from the little farm girl I saw up at the studio. I don't suppose you'll eat anything but a little bird-seed."

She was elated to see the maître d'hôtel shake hands wi' 'r escort and ask him how he was and where he had been. Jim apologized for neglecting to call recently, and the two sauntered like friends across to a table where half a dozen waiters bowed and smiled and welcomed the prodigal home.

When they were seated the head waiter said: "The moosels vit sauce marinière are nize to-nide."

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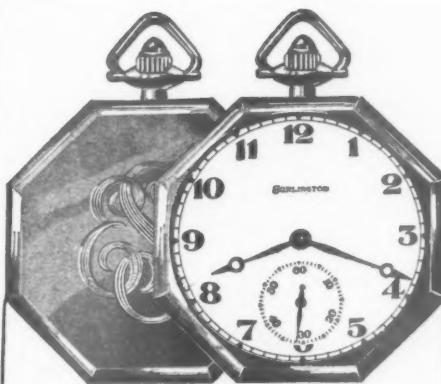
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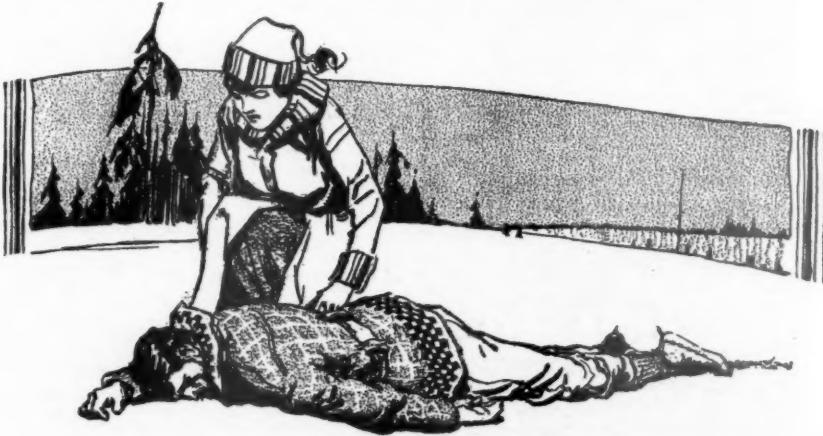
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Dyckman shook his head:

"Ump-ummi! I'm on the water wagon and the diet kitchen. Miss Adair can go as far as she likes but I've got to stick to a little thick soup, a big, thick steak and after, a little French pastry, some coffee and a bottle of polly water—and I'll risk a mug of old musty."

He turned to Kedzie: "And now I've ordered, what do you want? I never could order for anybody else."

Kedzie was disappointed in him. He was nothing like Ferriday. He didn't use a French word once. She was afraid to venture on her own.

"I'll take the same things," she said.

"Sensible lady," said Jim. "Women who work must eat."

Kedzie hated to be referred to as a worker by an idler. She little knew how much Jim Dyckman wished he were a worker.

She could not make him out. Her little hook had dragged out Leviathan and she was surprised to find how unlike he was to her plans for her first millionaire. He ate like a hungry man who ordered what he wanted and made no effort to want what he did not want. He had had so much elaborated food that he craved few courses and simple. He said what came into his head, without frills or pose. He was sincerely delighted with Kedzie and made neither secret nor poetry of it.

Toward the last of the dinner Kedzie ceased to try to find in him what was not there. She accepted him as the least affected person she had ever met. He could afford to be unaffected and careless and spontaneous. He had nothing to gain. He had everything already. Kedzie would have said that he ought to have been happy because of that, as if that were not as good an excuse for discontent as any. In any case, Kedzie said to herself:

"He's the real thing."

She wanted to be that very thing,—that most difficult thing,—real. It became her new ambition.

AFTER the dinner Dyckman offered to take her home. He had a limousine waiting for him. She did not ask him to put her into a taxicab. She was

not afraid to have him ride home with her. She was afraid he wouldn't. She was not ashamed of the apartment-house she was living in now. It was nothing wonderful, but all the money had been spent on the hall. And that was as far as Dyckman would get—yet.

Kedzie had acquired a serenity toward all the world except what she called "high society." In her mind the word *high* had the significance it has with reference to game that has been kept to the last critical moments, and trembles, exquisitely putrid, between being eaten immediately and being thrown away soon.

There is enough and to spare of that high element among the wealthy, but so there is among the poor and among all the middlings. Kedzie had met with it on her way up, and she expected to find it in Dyckman. She looked forward to a thrilling adventure.

She could not have imagined that Dyckman was far more afraid of her than she of him. She was so tiny and he so big that she terrorized him as a mouse an elephant, or a baby a saddle-horse. The elephant is probably afraid that he will squash the little gliding insect, the horse that he might step on the child.

The disparity between Jim Dyckman and Kedzie was not so great, and they were both of the same species. But he felt a kind of terror of her. And yet she fascinated him as an interesting toy that laughed and talked and probably would not say "Mamma!" if squeezed.

Dyckman had been lonely and blue, rejected and dejected. Kedzie was something different. He had known lots of actresses, large and small, stately, learned, cheap, stupid, brilliant, bad, good, gorgeous, shabby, wanton, icy. But Kedzie was his first movie-actress. She dwelt in a strange realm of unknown colors and machineries.

She was a new toy in a new toyhouse—a whole Noah's ark of queer toys. He wanted to play with those toys. She made him a *revenant* to childhood. Or as he put it:

"Gee, but you make me feel as silly as a kid."

That surprised Kedzie. It was not

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the sort of talk she expected from a world which was stranger to her than the movie-studio to him. He was perfectly natural, and that threw her into a spasm of artificiality.

He sat staring down at her. He put his hands under his knees and sat on them to keep them from touching her as they wanted to. For all he knew, she was covered with fresh paint. That made her practically irresistible. Would it come off if he kissed her? He had to find out.

Finally he said—so helplessly, passively, that it would be more accurate to say it was said by him:

"Say, Miss Adair, I'm a dead goner if you don't gimme a kiss."

Kedzie was horrified. Skip Magruder would have been eleganter than that. She answered with dignity:

"Certainly, if you so desire."

That ought to have chaperoned him back to his senses, but he was too far gone. His long arms shot out, went

round her, gathered her up to his breast. His high head came down like a swan's, and his lips pressed hers.

Whatever her soul was, her flesh was all girlhood in one flower of lithe stem, leaf, petal, sepal and perfume. There was nothing of the opiate poppy, the ominous orchid or even that velvet voluptuary, the rose. She was like a great pink, sweet, shy, fragrant common wild honeysuckle-blossom.

Jim Dyckman was so whelmed by the youth and flavor of her that his rapture exploded in an unsmothered gasp:

"Golly! but you're great!"

Kedzie was heartbroken. Gilfoyle had done better than that. She had been kissed by several million dollars, and she was not satisfied!

But Dyckman was. He felt that Kedzie had solved the problem of Charity Coe. She had cleared his soul of that hopeless obsession—he thought—just then!

The next installment of "*We Can't Have Everything*" will be in the March issue, on the news-stands February 23rd. It even surpasses this one.

A MAN'S MAN

A NOVEL BY PETER B. KYNE

Continued from page 703 of this issue.

form of execution where the prisoner is given a running chance, and the firing-squad practices wing shooting. If the prisoner manages, miraculously, to escape, he is not pursued!

A doubt, however, crossed the sergeant's mind. "But, my general," he expostulated, "Señor Sarros cannot accept the *ley fuga*. He is very lame. That is not giving him the chance your Excellency desires he should have."

"I wasn't thinking of that," Ricardo replied. "I was thinking I'm killing him without a fair trial for the reason that he's so infernally ripe for the gallows that a trial would have been a joke. Nevertheless, I am really killing him because he killed my father—and that is scarcely fair. My father was a gentle-

man. Sergeant, is your pistol loaded?"

"Yes, General."

"Give it to Señor Sarros."

As the sergeant started forward to comply, Ricardo drew his own service revolver and then motioned Mother Jenks and the firing-squad to stand aside while he crossed to the center of the cemetery. "Sarros," he called, "I am going to let God decide which one of us shall live. When the sergeant gives the command to fire, I shall open fire on you, and you are free to do the same to me. Sergeant, if he kills me and escapes unhurt, my orders are to escort him to the bay in my carriage and put him safely aboard the steamer."

Mother Jenks sat down on a tombstone. "Gord's truth!" she gasped, "but

there's a rare plucked 'un." Aloud she croaked: "Don't be a bally ass, sir."

"Silence!" he commanded.

The sergeant handed Sarros the revolver. "You heard what I said?" Ricardo called.

Sarros bowed gravely.

"You understand your orders, Sergeant?"

"Yes, General."

"Very well. Proceed. If this prisoner fires before you give the word, have your squad riddle him."

The sergeant backed away and gazed owlishly from the prisoner to his captor. "Ready!" he called. Both revolvers came up. "Fire!" he shouted, and the two shots were discharged simultaneously. Ricardo's cap flew off his head, but he remained standing, while Sarros staggered back against the wall and there recovering himself gamely, fired again. He scored a clean miss, and Ricardo's gun barked three times; Sarros sprawled on his face, rose to his knees, raised his pistol halfway, fired into the sky and slid forward on his face. Ricardo stood beside the body until the sergeant approached and stood to attention, his attitude saying:

"It is over. What next, General?"

"Take the squad back to the arsenal, Sergeant," Ricardo ordered him coolly, and walked back to recover his uniform cap. He was smiling as he ran his finger through a gaping hole in the upper half of the crown.

"Well, Mrs. Jenks," he announced when he rejoined the old lady, "that was better than executing him with a firing-squad. I gave him a square deal. Now his friends can never say that I murdered him."

He extended his hand to help Mother Jenks to her feet. She stood erect and felt again that queer swelling of the heart, the old feeling of suffocation.

"Steady, lass!" she mumbled. "Old on to me, sir. It's my bally haneurism. Gor'—I'm—chokin'—"

He caught her in his arms as she lurched toward him. Her face was purple, and in her eyes there was a queer fierce light that went out suddenly, leaving them dull and glazed. When she commenced to sag in his arms, he

eased her gently to the ground and laid her on her back in the grass.

"The nipper's safe, 'Enery," he heard her murmur. "I've raised 'er a lydy, s'elp me—she's back where—you found her—'Enery—"

She quivered, and the light came creeping back into her eyes before it faded forever. "Comin', 'Enery—darlin'," she whispered; and then the soul of Mother Jenks, who had a code and lived up to it (which is more than the majority of us do), had departed upon the ultimate journey. Ricardo gazed down on the hard old mouth, softened now by a little half-smile of mingled yearning and gladness: "What a wonderful soul you had," he murmured, and kissed her.

In the end she slept in the niche in the wall of the Cathedral de la Vera Cruz, beside her sainted 'Enery.

CHAPTER XXV

THREE days passed. Don Juan Cafetero had been buried with all the pomp and circumstance of a national hero; Mother Jenks, too, had gone to her appointed resting-place, and El Buen Amigo had been closed forever. Ricardo had issued a proclamation announcing himself provisional president of Sobrante; a convention of revolutionary leaders had been held, and a provisional cabinet selected. A day for the national elections had been named; the wreckage of the brief revolution had been cleared away, and the wheels of government were once more revolving freely and noiselessly. And while all of this had been going on, John Stuart Webster had lain on his back, staring at the palace ceiling and absolutely forbidden to receive visitors. He was still engaged in this mild form of gymnastics on the third day when the door of his room opened and Dolores looked in on him.

"Good evening, Caliph," she called. "Aren't you dead yet?"

It was exactly the tone she should have adopted to get the best results, for Webster had been mentally and physically ill since she had seen him last, and needed some such pleasantry as this to

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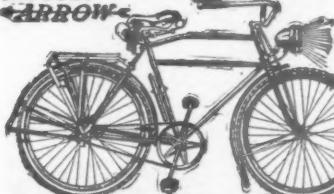
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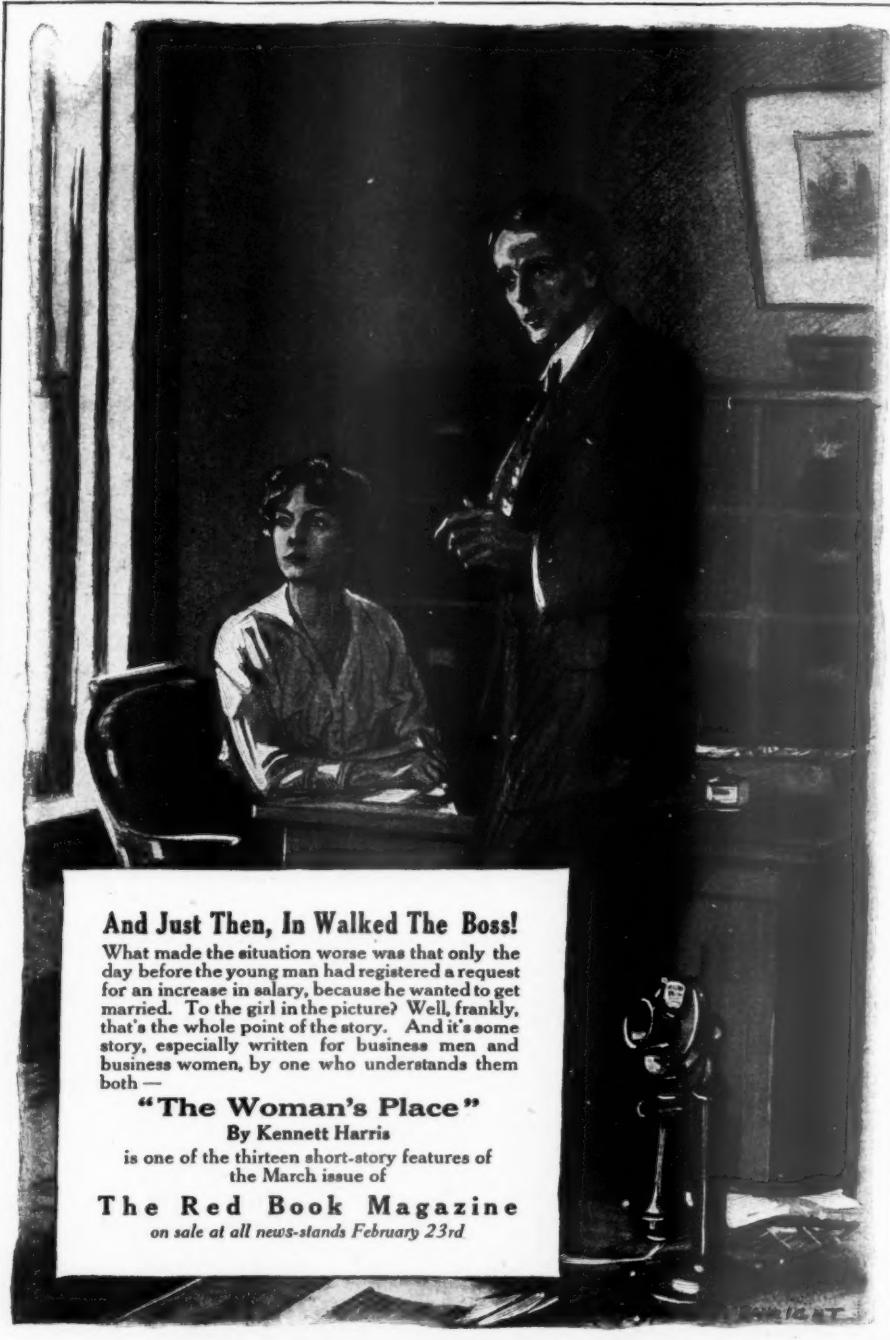
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lift him out of his gloomy mood. He grinned at her boyishly.

"No, I'm not dead. On the contrary, I'm feeling real chirpy. Won't you come in and visit for a while, Miss Ruey?"

"Well, since you've invited me, I shall accept." Entering, she stood beside his bed and took the hand he extended toward her. "This is the first opportunity I've had, Miss Ruey," he began, "to apologize for the shock I gave you the other day. I should have come back to you as I promised, instead of getting into a fight and scaring you half to death. I hope you'll forgive me, because I'm paying for my fun now—with interest."

"Very well, Caliph. I'll forgive you—on one condition."

"Who am I to resist having a condition imposed upon me? Name your terms. I shall obey."

"I'm weary of being called Miss Ruey. I want to be Dolores—to you."

"By the toenails of Moses," he reflected, "there is no escape. She's determined to rock the boat." Aloud he said: "All right, Dolores. I suppose I may as well take the license of the old family friend. I guess Bill won't mind."

"Billy hasn't a word to say about it," she retorted, regarding him with that calm, impersonal, yet vitally interested look that always drove him frantic with the desire for her.

"Well, of course, I understand that," he countered. "Naturally, since Bill is only a man, you'll have to manage him and he'll have to take orders."

"Caliph, you're a singularly persistent man, once you get an idea into your head. Please understand me, once for all: Billy Geary is a dear, and it's a mystery to me why every girl in the world isn't perfectly crazy about him, but every rule has its exceptions—and Billy and I are just good friends. I'd like to know where you got the idea we're engaged to be married."

"Why—why—well, aren't you?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, you—er—you ought to be. I expected—that is, I planned—I mean Bill told me and—and—and—er—it never occurred to me you could possibly have the—er—crust—to refuse him. Of

course you're going to marry him when he asks you?"

"Of course I am not."

"Ah-h-h-h!" John Stuart Webster gazed at her in frank amazement. "Not going to marry Bill Geary!" he cried, highly scandalized.

"I know you think I ought to, and I suppose it will appear quite incomprehensible to you when I do not—"

"Why, Dolores, my dear girl! This is most amazing. Didn't Bill ask you to marry him, before he left?"

"Yes, he did me that honor, and I declined him."

"You what?"

She smiled at him so maternally that his hand itched to drag her down to him and kiss her curving lips.

"Do you mind telling me just why you took this extraordinary attitude?"

"You have no right to ask, but I'll tell you. I refused Billy because I didn't love him enough—that way. What's more, I never could."

HE rolled his head to one side and softly, very softly, whistled two bars of "The Spanish Cavalier" through his teeth. He was properly thunderstruck—so much so, in fact, that for a moment he actually forgot her presence, the while he pondered this most incredible state of affairs.

"I see it all now. It's as clear as mud," he announced finally. "You refused poor old Bill and broke his heart, and so he went away and hasn't had the courage to write me since. I'm afraid Bill and I both regarded this fight as practically won—all over but the wedding-march, as one might put it. I might as well confess I hustled the boy down from the mine just so you two could get married and light out on your honeymoon. I figured Bill could kill two birds with one stone—have his honeymoon and get rid of his malaria, and return here in three or four months to relieve me, after I had the mine in operation. Poor boy! That was a frightful song-and-dance you gave him."

"I suspected you were the matchmaker in this case. I must say I think you're old enough to know better, Caliph John."

"You did, eh? Well, what made you think so?"

She chuckled. "Oh, you're very obvious—to a woman."

"I forgot that you reveal the past and foretell the future."

"You are really very clumsy, Caliph. You should never try to direct the destiny of any woman."

"I'm on the sick-list," he pleaded, "and it isn't sporting of you to discuss me. You're healthy—so let us discuss you. Dolores, do you figure Bill's case to be absolutely hopeless?"

"Absolutely, Caliph."

"Hum-m-m!"

AGAIN Webster had recourse to meditation, seeing which, Dolores walked to the pier-glass in the corner, satisfied herself that her coiffure was just so and returned to his side, singing softly a little song that had floated out over the transom of Webster's room door into the hall one night:

A Spanish cavalier,
Went out to rope a steer,
Along with his paper *cigar-r-rol*
"Caramba!" said he.
"Mañana you will be
Mucho bueno carne por mio."

He turned his head and looked up at her suddenly, searchingly. "Is there anybody else in Bill's way?" he demanded. "I admit it's none of my business, but—"

"Yes, Caliph, there is some one else."

"I thought so." This rather viciously. "I'm willing to gamble a hundred to one, sight unseen, that whoever he is, he isn't half the man Bill is."

"That," she replied coldly, "is a matter of personal opinion."

"And Bill's clock is fixed for keeps?"

"Yes, Caliph. And he never had a chance from the start."

"Why not?"

"Well, I met the other man first, Caliph."

"Oh! Do you mind telling me what this other bird does for a living?"

"He's a mining man, like Billy."

"All right! Has the son of a horse-thief got a mine like Bill's? That's something to consider, Dolores."

"He has a mine fully as good as Billy's. Like Billy, he owns a half interest in it, too."

"Hum-m-m! How long have you known him?"

"Not very long."

"Be sure you're right—then go ahead," John Stuart Webster warned her. "Don't marry in haste and repent at leisure, Dolores. Know your man before you let him buy the wedding-ring. There's a heap of difference, my dear, between sentiment and sentimentality."

"I'm sure of my man, Caliph."

He was silent again, thinking rapidly. "Well, of course," he began again presently, "while there was the slightest possibility of Bill winning you, I would have died before saying that which I am about to say to you now, Dolores, because Bill is my friend, and I'd never double-cross him. With reference to this other man, however, I have no such code to consider. I'm pretty well convinced I'm out of the running, but I'll give that lad a race if it's the last act of my life. He's a stranger to me, and he isn't on the job to protect his claim, so why shouldn't I stake it if I can? But are you quite certain you aren't making a grave mistake in refusing Bill? He's quite a boy, my dear. I know him from soul to suspenders, and he'd be awfully good to you. He's kind and gentle and considerate, and he's not a mollycoddle, either."

"I can't help it, Caliph. Please don't talk about him any more. I know somebody who is kinder and nobler and gentler." She ceased abruptly, fearful of breaking down her reserve and saying too much.

"Well, if Bill's case is hopeless,"—his hand came groping for hers, the while he held her with his searching, wistful glance,—"I wonder what mine looks like. That is, Dolores, I—I—"

"Yes, John?"

"I've played fair with my friend," he whispered eagerly. "I'm not going to ask you to marry me, but I want to tell you that to me you're such a very wonderful woman I can't help loving you with my whole heart and soul."

"I have suspected this, John," she replied gravely.

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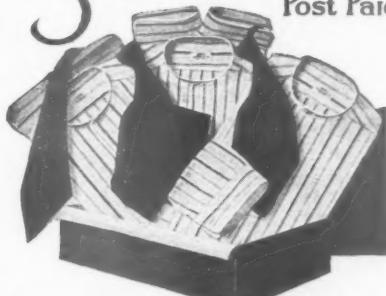


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"I suppose so. I'm such an obvious old fool. I've had my dream, and I've put it behind me, but I—I just want you to know I love you; as long as I live, I shall want to serve you. When you're married to this other man, and things may not break just right for you both—if I have something he wants, in order to make you happy, I want you to know it's yours to give to him. I—I guess that's all, Dolores."

"Thank you, John. Would you like to know this man I'm going to marry?"

"Yes, I think I'd like to congratulate the scoundrel."

"Then I'll introduce you to him, John. I first met him on a train in Death Valley, California. He was a shaggy old dear, all whiskers and rags, but his whiskers couldn't hide his smile, and his rags couldn't hide his manhood, and when he thrashed a drummer because the man annoyed me, I just couldn't help falling in love with him. Even when he fibbed to me and disputed my assertion that we had met before—"

"Good land of love—and the calves got loose!" he almost shouted as he held up his one sound arm to her. "My dear, my dear—"

"Oh, sweetheart," she whispered laying her hot cheek against his, "it's taken you so long to say it, but I love you all the more for the dear thoughts that made you hesitate."

HE was silent a few moments, digesting his amazement, speechless with the great happiness that was his—and then Dolores was kissing the back of the hand of that helpless, bandaged arm lying across his breast. He had a tightening in his throat, for he had not expected love; and that sweet, benignant, humble little kiss spelled adoration and eternal surrender; when she looked at him again, the mists of joy were in his eyes.

"Dear old Caliph John!" she crooned. "He's never had a woman to understand his funny ways and appreciate them and take care of him, has he?" She patted his cheek. "And bless his simple old heart, he would rather give up his love than be false to his friend. Yes, indeed. Johnny Webster respects 'No Shooting'

signs when he sees them, but he tells fibs and pretends to be very stupid when he really isn't. So you wouldn't be false to Billy—eh, dear? I'm glad to know that, because the man who cannot be false to his friend can never be false to his wife."

He crushed her down to him and held her there for a long time. "My dear," he said presently, "isn't there something you have to say to me?"

"I love you, John," she whispered, and sealed the sweet confession with a true lover's kiss.

"All's well with the world," John Stuart Webster announced when he could use his lips once more for conversation. "And," he added, "owing to the fact that I started a trifle late in life, I believe I could stand a little more of the same."

The door opened, and Ricardo looked in on them.

"Killjoy!" Webster growled. "Old Killjoy the Thirteenth, King of So-brante. Is this a surprise to you?"

"Not a bit of it, Jack. I knew it was due."

"Am I welcome in the Ruey family?"

Ricardo came over and kissed his sister. "Don't be a lobster, Jack," he protested. "I dislike foolish questions." And he pressed his friend's hand with a fervor that testified to his pleasure.

"I'm sorry to crowd in at a time like this, Jack," he continued, with a hug for Dolores, "but Mr. What-you-may-call-him, the American consul, has called to pay his respects. As a fellow-citizen of yours, he is vitally interested in your welfare. Would you care to receive him for a few minutes?"

"One minute will do," Webster declared with emphasis. "Show the human slug up, Rick."

Mr. Lemuel Tolliver tripped breezily in with outstretched hand. "My dear Mr. Webster," he began, but Webster cut him short with a peremptory gesture.

"Listen, friend Tolliver," he said. "The only reason I received you was to tell you I'm going to remain in this country awhile and help develop it. I may even conclude to grow up with it. I shall not, of course, renounce my American citizenship; and of course, as

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an American citizen, I am naturally interested in the man my country sends to Sobrante to represent it. I might as well be frank and tell you that you won't do. I called on you once to do your duty, and you weren't there; I told you then I might have something to say about your job later on, and now I'm due to say it. Mr. Tolliver, I'm the power behind the throne in this little Jim-crow country, and to quote your own elegant phraseology, you, as American consul, are *nux vomica* to the Sobrantean government. Moreover, as soon as the Sobrantean ambassador reaches Washington, he's going to tell the President what you are, and then the President will be courteous enough to remove you. In the meantime, fare thee well, Mr. Consul."

"But, Mr. Webster—"

"Vaya!"

Mr. Tolliver, appreciating the utter futility of argument, bowed and departed.

"Verily, life grows sweeter with each passing day," Webster murmured whimsically. "Rick, old man, I think you had better escort the Consul to the front door. Your presence is *nux vomica* to me also. See that you back me up and dispose of that fellow Tolliver, or you can't come to our wedding—can he, sweetheart?"

WHEN Ricardo had taken his departure, laughing, John Stuart Webster looked up quite seriously at his wife-to-be. "Can you explain to me, Dolores," he asked, "how it happened that your relatives and your father's old friends here in Sobrante, whom you met shortly after your arrival, never informed you that Ricardo was living?"

"They didn't know any more about him than I did, and he left here as a mere boy. He was scarcely acquainted with his relatives, all of whom bowed quite submissively to the Sarros yoke. Indeed, my father's half-brother, Antonio Ruey, actually accepted a portfolio under the Sarros régime and held it up to his death. Ricardo has a wholesome contempt for his relatives, and as for his father's old friends, none of them knew anything about his plans.

Apparently his identity was known only to the Sarros intelligence bureau, and it did not permit the information to leak out."

"Funny mix-up," he commented. "And by the way, where did you get all the inside dope about Neddy Jerome?"

She laughed and related to him the details of Neddy's perfidy.

"And you actually agreed to deliver me, hog-tied and helpless, to that old schemer, Dolores?"

"Why not, dear. I loved you; I always meant to marry you, if you'd let me; and ten thousand dollars would have lasted me for pin money a long time."

"Well, you and Neddy have both lost out. Better send the old pelican a cable and wake him out of his day-dream."

"I sent the cable yesterday, John dear."

"Extraordinary woman!"

"I've just received an answer. Neddy has spent nearly fifty dollars telling me by cable what a fine man you are and how thankful I ought to be to the good Lord for permitting you to marry me."

"Dolores, you are perfectly amazing. I only proposed to you a minute ago."

"I know you did, slow-poke, but that is not your fault. You would have proposed to me yesterday, only I thought best not to disturb you until you were a little stronger. This evening, however, I made up my mind to settle the matter, and so I—"

"But suppose I hadn't proposed to you, after all?"

"Then, John, I should have proposed to you, I fear."

"But you were running an awful risk, sending that telegram to Neddy Jerome."

She took one large red ear in each little hand and shook his head lovingly. "Silly," she whispered, "don't be a goose. I knew you loved me; I would have known it, even if Neddy Jerome hadn't told me so. So I played a safe game all the way through, and oh, dear Caliph John, I'm so happy I could cry."

"God bless my mildewed soul," John Stuart Webster murmured helplessly. The entire matter was quite beyond his comprehension!



Ki-Yi Steals A Chicken

Wherein a wise, wise collie commits a crime
and thereby smooths the course of true love.

By Edwin Baird

IT was scarcely the name for him, for he was not that sort of a dog. He was no Chinese poodle; neither did he "ki-yi" —ever. He was a Scotch collie, and a good one; and when he expressed himself, he showed vigor and fluency ridiculously transcending a thin "ki-yi."

However, names meant even less to him than to the tragic daughter of the House of Capulet; and at the present moment he was irked by a matter of such grave concern that nomenclature was as nothing.

In the first place, all was not well with his young mistress, Miss Fanny Marshall; and in the second, he felt he ought to help her. Her distress was pitiable. Since day before yesterday she had wandered about the house and through her flower garden as one drenched with ineffable sorrow. And now, sitting here on the small front porch of her mother's cottage, gazing off into the dying day, her brown eyes (to him) were as pensive as the midsummer twilight.

He sat on his haunches and contemplated her face, his eyes anxious. He thwacked the porch with his tail. He whined. He marched thrice around her chair, nudging her with his muzzle. He whined again. He lay on his side and pawed her foot in the accomplished way which invariably, hitherto, had provoked a like playfulness in her.

But something was askew on this July evening—no denying that. For the first time his mistress was unmoved by his attentions. One perfunctory pat on the head was his sole reward.

He tried to analyze her mood; and as a means to this end he again examined her face, his ears upthrust, his eyes alert, his throat emitting odd, high-pitched little sounds of anxious appeal. The sudden activity of a flea interrupted his scrutiny,—because, as every dog knows, you can't focus your gaze on a given object while scratching your head with your right hind foot,—but it stimulated his flow of thought; and all at once he attained an agreeable result in his

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analysis. Deferring pursuit of the flea, therefore, he sped joyously into the house.

And when he returned he bore triumphantly in his mouth the remedy (as he thought) for Miss Marshall's melancholy—i. e., a banana, neatly purloined from the dining-room table.

THERE was reason in this seeming madness. As has been said, Ki-Yi was by way of being a student of philosophy, and he diagnosed life in simple terms, his theory being that all the sorrow thereof proceeds either from insufficient food or lack of exercise in the open air. Now, then, since his mistress showed no longing for spicy woods or shady lanes, it naturally followed she was in need of nourishment; hence the banana.

But there was a flaw in the hypothesis, it seemed. She received his gift as she had his demonstrations—with a detached smile and a preoccupied caress, clearly indicating her thoughts were not of him. That done, she dropped the banana carelessly into an adjacent chair and resumed her contemplation of the fading light. And Ki-Yi resumed his search for the flea, a disappointed dog. So his offering pleased her not (ran his thought). Well, what next? Maybe she would like something else. Surely she must be hungry—else she would not be so sad. Thinking thus, he fared again to the dining-room and from the plate of fruit on the table there he plucked a peach, which he brought hopefully to the porch.

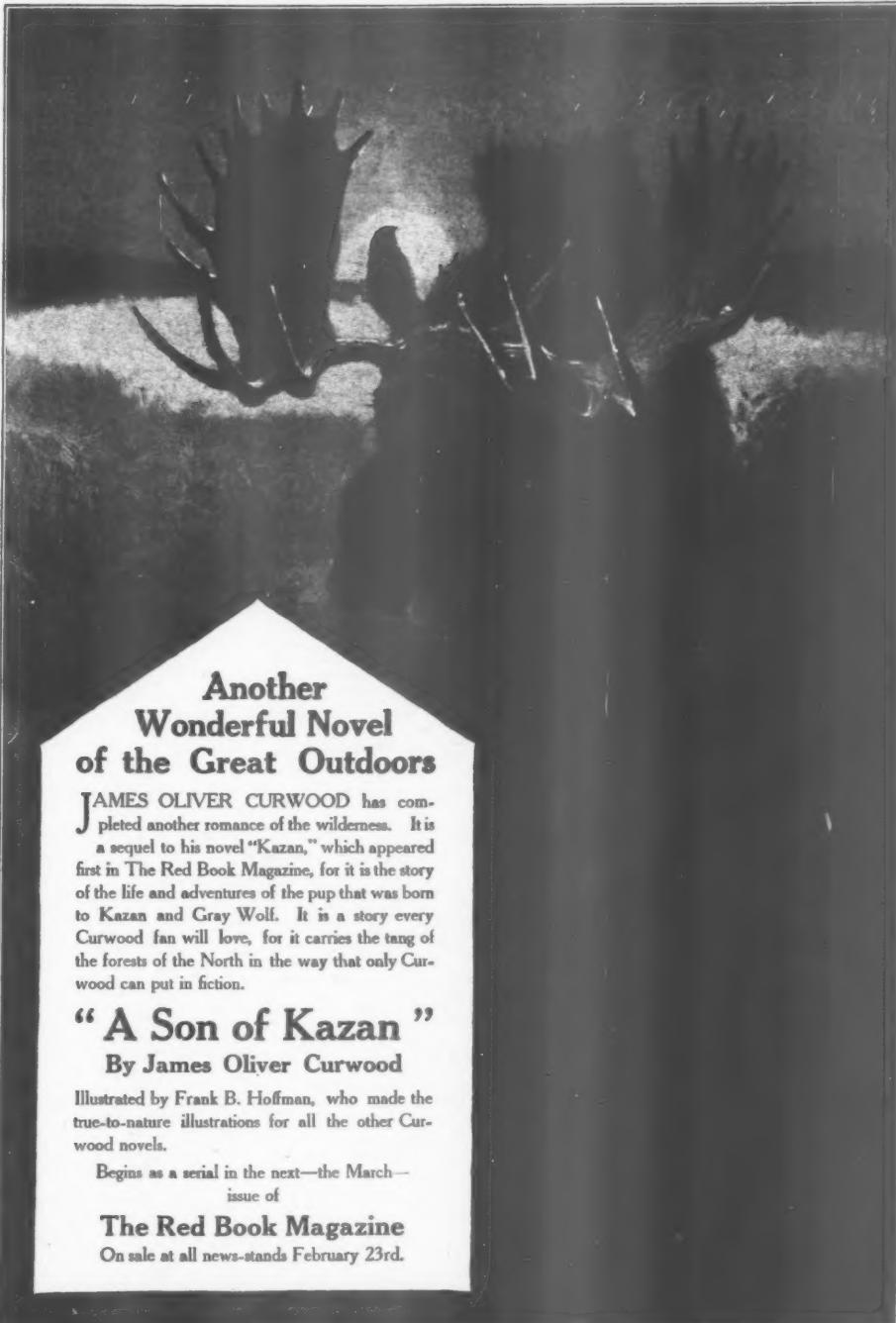
But matters were even worse now. Her brother sat on the porch steps, her mother in the chair beside her; and from the three-cornered talk in animated progress Ki-Yi was excluded. He paused, the peach in his mouth, his ears cocked forward, intently looking from face to face through the warm, scented dusk, striving assiduously to understand what they said.

AND this is what the three people on the veranda had to say:

FANNY:

But I *am* happy, Mother. I never was happier in all my life. I'm so happy

834



**Another
Wonderful Novel
of the Great Outdoors**

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD has completed another romance of the wilderness. It is a sequel to his novel "Kazan," which appeared first in The Red Book Magazine, for it is the story of the life and adventures of the pup that was born to Kazan and Gray Wolf. It is a story every Curwood fan will love, for it carries the tang of the forests of the North in the way that only Curwood can put in fiction.

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Begins as a serial in the next—the March—
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KI-YI STEALS A CHICKEN

it frightens me. Nobody has a *right* to be so happy. And yet—

BROTHER (mockingly) :

And yet, I suppose, you'd rather have a multi-millionaire. Everybody knows Paul Brandon is the richest man in this town, and why you're not tickled silly over landing him *I don't know*.

MOTHER (to Fanny) :

If only your dear father had lived to see you now! I often told him you'd marry well. Paul is immensely wealthy—

FANNY (interrupting) :

That's the only trouble. If only he weren't wealthy, I'd be—oh, ever so much happier.

BROTHER (gaspingly) :

Well, of all the brilliant remarks!

MOTHER (astonished) :

But, Fanny, my dear!

FANNY :

Well, you see, Mother, ever since his parents moved to Spain and left him their home here and a lot of money, every girl in town set her heart on being mistress of that mammoth house of luxury; and not because they pitied his lonely grandeur there, either, although that's what they usually told him. So now, you see, how can he know I'm not the same as the rest of the girls?

BROTHER (politely) :

How, indeed?

FANNY :

He said he was coming over to-night, but—he hasn't come!

MOTHER :

He will soon, I'm sure. It's still early.

FANNY :

Well, anyway, I wish he weren't rich. It makes everything so hard and unnatural. I wish he were *poor*, like us!

BROTHER (chokingly) :

Well, of all the—

KI-YI missed the rest of that sentence, for the ubiquitous flea (or maybe its cousin) had executed a flank attack, and Ki-Yi dropped the peach and went for him with his teeth. But the tone of his mistress' voice, and his interpretation of the general talk, argued she was still in distress; and so the food-idea persisted.

"Well, say!" exclaimed Brother, picking up the peach. "What'll that dog do next?"

Uninterested in this question, Ki-Yi sped kitchenward, seeking meat. Instinct submitted that meat, and no other thing, was what his mistress wanted now. His quest was unrewarded, though, since opening refrigerators was not one of his accomplishments. Thwarted, but undismayed, he devoted his thought to the problem and remembered a house of notable generosity in the matter of hand-outs. He started that way forthwith, and presently was loping through quiet streets, a yellow object of quivering eagerness, passing those who strolled in the summer evening; and so he came to a commanding home of stone and brick superbly set on an eminent hill.

With no heed for the thoughtful young man who sat on the front veranda, smoking a thin cigar and gazing into the starlit night somewhat as Fanny had done, Ki-Yi hastened to the kitchen door, for it was here alone, as he knew, that edibles were offered. His imploring barks earning no recognition, he opened the screen with his paw and entered, muzzle lifted, nostrils aquiver. Unerringly he proceeded to the kitchen table, whereon was a roasted capon, newly come from the dining-room, yet scarcely touched. He whined entreatingly, beseeching that somebody hand him the bird that he might carry it to his unhappy mistress. But none answered. He was alone.

In his way, Ki-Yi was a well-bred animal and not given to kleptomania; but this was a desperate instance requiring drastic action. Resting his front paws on the table, he seized the fowl in his teeth and departed promptly.

THREE minutes later an excited negro woman emerged to the veranda and advised the young man sitting there that some low-down scamp had sneaked off wif de chicking while she was clearin' de dinin'-table. Not this intelligence, however, but the head-lamps of a motor-car, ascending the driveway to the house, stirred him from his dismal reverie. Rising, he crossed to the veranda steps and there confronted the gray-haired man who alighted from the automobile.

"I suppose you've heard the worst, Mr. Payne?"

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"Only what you 'phoned me, Paul. Is everything gone?"

Paul Brandon handed a telegram to the older man, who read it by the light from the French windows and then handed it back with a low whistle.

"Jove! Wiped out, eh?"

"Completely. Everything went when the Continental closed its doors to-day. I'm leaving for New York to-night on the eighty-fifty. I don't expect to come back. You will have charge of things here, Mr. Payne. Not," he added, with a grim smile, "that there's much left now. This place must go, of course, and what other property I own here. I intend to repay my creditors as far as I am able."

They sat and discussed the business until Paul, consulting his watch, remarked: "Eight-thirty. Hadn't we better start?"

But the lawyer detained him. "Why need you go East to-night, my boy? What good will it do?"

Paul was standing now, suit-case in hand. He stared frowningly into the darkness; then he abruptly resumed his chair and faced the attorney. "Since you ask me, I'll tell you why: I'm running away from a girl—or perhaps it's only my weaker self. Anyway, we're engaged, and I'm afraid if I see her I'll never be able to give her up; and of course I must give her up now. No girl wants to marry a bankrupt. So there you are, you see. By to-morrow, or next day, she'll know what's happened; and then if she doesn't break the engagement, I'll write or telegraph, and release her from her promise. I may join my parents in Madrid, or maybe I'll start anew in South America—I haven't decided yet. Anyway," added young Paul Brandon, rising and looking again at his watch, "we'd better start. I've barely time to make that train."

BRANDON, however, was destined to make no trains this night. As he started motorward, Payne following, Ki-Yi bounded up the walk, bearing in his mouth a laden basket which he dropped at Brandon's feet; then he cringed as one who expects swift retribution.

The astonished young man was further amazed by the contents of the basket. "Why," said he, "it's the stolen capon!" And then he perceived that Ki-Yi's mistress, outdistanced in the upward climb from the street, was also here. She was bare-headed and dressed in summery white, and when she crossed the pool of light near the veranda steps, she was never more beautiful, never more desirable and never, so it seemed, more difficult to attain.

"I must apologize for Ki. I can't imagine why he should drag that chicken home and drop it in my lap, for he's never stolen anything before, and yet that's exactly what he did. I'd no idea, of course, who owned it, but I put it in a basket and scolded him severely, and told him to take it straight back. Then, to make sure, I followed him, and maybe you can imagine how mortified I am to find that *you*—Oh!" she cried in sudden dismay as, for the first time, she espied his suit-case, "are you leaving town to-night?"

Paul Brandon moistened his lips, glanced nervously over his shoulder, saw that Lawyer Payne had developed an interest in some night-blooming flowers beyond earshot, and then looked back to the witching girl. . . .

KI-YI, listening intelligently to their subsequent talk, discerned in a general way that their emotions were of varied character: surprise, gladness, sorrow, joy, being not the least. Following two quite audible kisses, he heard his mistress' thrilling voice, low and sweet and tremulous:

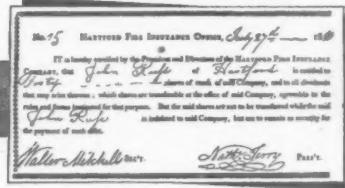
"Doesn't it frighten you sometimes to find how much happiness can hang on a thread? Why, Paul, if it hadn't been for Ki's peccadillo, you and I might never have seen each other again!"

"It wasn't a peccadillo," said Paul, "but a worthy deed, which shall be fittingly rewarded." Whereon he lifted the capon from the basket and placed it in Ki-Yi's mouth.

And Ki-Yi, just to show he understood all that had been and was being said, wagged body and tail with ecstasy and released his grip on the noble fowl to give three tremendous barks.

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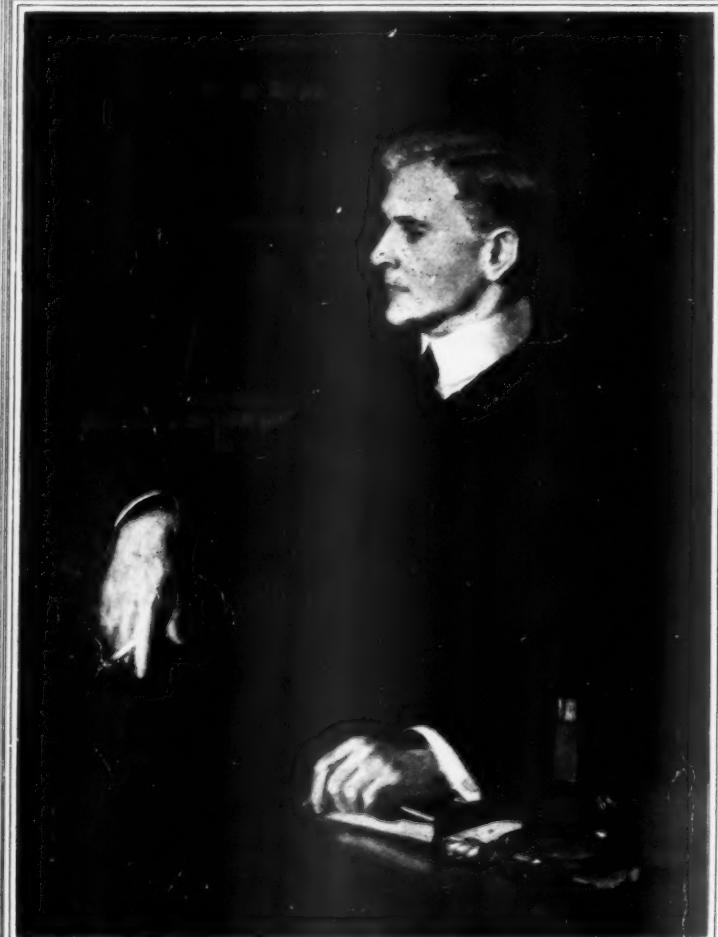
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